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ABSTRACT

This paper briefly reviews the current status of government publications, including the local, state, and Federal levels, with particular attention to crucial problems of availability and accessibility to the public. It examines issues and proposed changes in government policy with respect to government documents, e.g., (1) Is there a need for a national center for government documents? (2) What should be the relationship of the Government Printing Office to the national program? (3) How should state and local documents be made available nationally? (4) What role should private enterprise play in publishing government information and in assuring its accessibility? (5) How can government publications make a full contribution to the mainstream of useful and used information? Implications for change are highlighted and a proposed alternative structure for the Federal Depository Library Program is appended. (Author)

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GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS: THEIR ROLE IN THE NATIONAL PROGRAM FOR LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES

Submitted to:

National Commission on Libraries and Information Science

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Bernard M. Fry

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

By

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December, 1977

"Public awareness and access to government documents is essential to the successful operation of a democracy."

William S. Moorhead,
Chairman of the Foreign
Operations and Government
Information Subcommittee,
House Committee on Government
Operations (1974)

ABSTRACT

This paper briefly reviews the current status of government publications (including local, State, and Federal levels) with particular attention to crucial problems of availability and accessibility to the public. It examines issues and proposed changes in government policy with respect to government documents, e.g., (a) Is there a need for a national center for government documents? (b) What should be the relationship of the Government Printing Office to the national program? (c) How should state and local documents be made available nationally? (d) What role should private enterprise play in publishing government information and in assuring its accessibility? (e) How can government publications make a full contribution to the mainstream of useful and used information? Implications for change are highlighted.

AVAILABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY OF GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS IN THE NATIONAL PROGRAM FOR LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES

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PREFACE

This study of the availability and accessibility of government publications at all levels (Federal, state and local) has been prepared as a related paper at the request of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science. It attempts to break new ground in the following ways:

(1) all levels of government publications are analyzed separately in light of both common and peculiar manifestations of the same or related problems;

(2) using a systems approach, government publications are viewed as a total information resource, at present severely under-valued and under-used; and,

(3) recommendations are made for the transformation of the present Federal Depository Library System into a cooperative national network, consistent with the objectives of the National Program.

The many recommendations explicit throughout the paper and summarized in the last chapter and the appendix are not intended as a blueprint for change, but rather as a springboard study to stimulate further inquiry and research.

Previous attempts at comprehensive studies of the basic issues affecting public availability and access to government publications have been few in number and inconclusive of results because of the complexity and scope of problems encountered. The paucity of quantitative, summary documentation has proved a formidable, but not insurmountable, barrier to the development of needed conceptual overviews.

The Special Libraries Association (SLA) sponsored study of the Government Printing Office (GPO) and the two-year study of the American Library Association (ALA) Ad Hoc Committee on the Depository Library System stand out as substantial and constructive efforts in this area. The earlier concerns in 1966 and 1968 of the Association of State Library Agencies (ASLA) and the Public Documents Committee of ALA led in 1971 to a USOE supported research design developed by an Indiana University team guided by a joint Reference Services Division--Resources and Technical Services Division (ALA) subcommittee.

This prior concern for a conceptual overview contrasts with the current information-input overload of detail stemming from numerous task forces and study groups addressing specific problems and issues. It should be pointed out, however, that such specific fact-finding studies, largely conducted under the auspices of the Government Documents Round Table (ALA), have accounted for many of the major improvements in the handling of government publications in the recent past. Over the next several years, however, it is essential more attention and research be directed to creative systems development necessary to spearhead advances in public availability and access to government publications/information.

Until recent years government publications have had no standard and generally accepted definition. In 1962 as a part of the legislation relating to the depository program, government publications were defined as: "Informational matter which is printed as an individual document at Government expense or as required by law" (U.S. Code, Title 44, sec. 1901).

The evolutionary development of this official definition of government publications signifies more than a change in words and phrases. It reflects the transition of the functions of government printing and publishing from the point of view of the needs of government itself, to the point of view of meeting the information requirements of the citizens themselves.

Throughout the paper, the terms "government publications," "official publications," and "public documents" are used interchangeably, as are "publications" and "documents." In like manner, the words "reports," "research reports," and "technical reports" are used synonymously, as they appear in the professional literature.

With respect to the facts and statistics cited in the following pages, every effort has been made to obtain and verify the most accurate and recent data available. Nevertheless, new developments requiring an update are continually being reported which bring about rapid changes and improvements in practices affecting public availability and access.

On a practical note, attention is directed to the fact that the world of government publications is also a world of initials, acronyms, codes and classification symbols. Consequently in each chapter the meanings of any devices of this nature requiring reference are given in full the first time they occur in the text.

As a former documents librarian and instructor for a decade in courses on government documents, I am pleased to have the opportunity to write an assessment of public availability and access to documents in this vast and complicated field. Additionally, I have drawn upon related experience both within government and in academic institutions: as a college library administrator; head of Federal agency technical information services -- and depositories -- including the Atomic Energy Commission; the first director of the Clearinghouse for Federal Scientific and Technical Information (now the National Technical Information Service - NTIS); grants administrator, National Science Foundation; and currently editor of the international journal *Government Publications Review*.

The views set down are, of course, entirely my own responsibility. The contributions of professional colleagues in the library and information science community, in consultation and through the literature, have been numerous and substantial. My thanks are due particularly to Peter Hernon, a doctoral student at Indiana University, and to Bernadine Hoduski and Anthony Miele, both former GODORT (ALA) coordinators, for their comments and constructive criticisms. I am also indebted to many other librarians and document specialists in GODORT and the Special Libraries Association. Former associates in Federal agencies and in the private sector have added to a balanced point of view. And last, but by no means least, I am grateful for the patient and effective cooperation and work of Anne Fry and Margaret [illegible] in the preparation of the several drafts of this report.

Any summary imposes a somewhat arbitrary treatment on a field that does not yet think of itself as an integrated information system. I hope this brief account will generate discussion and change.

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May 1970

Chapter I

GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS: AN UNDERUTILIZED NATIONAL INFORMATION RESOURCE

The incorporation of government publications into the mainstream of library services should be considered a priority goal in the development of the National Program for Library and Information Services.

Representing a significant and integral part of the national information resources, government publications at all levels - Federal, state and local - are today a major source of information in practically every field of endeavor and are crucial to informed public decision-making. At the same time government publications are recognized as probably the most neglected and underutilized information resource available to the public. The root cause of this paradox lies in the diversity and confusion of government policies and in the widespread lack of public awareness of the existence of government publications which might be of value to them.

A. Role of Government-Produced Information

Activities of the Federal, state, and local governments have expanded dramatically in the twentieth century. The increasing volume and diversity of government publications reflect this expansion. Information is gathered and published in support of the need for legislative and administrative action. As social programs are put into operation, government-produced information becomes central to effective problem solving at the Federal, state, and community levels. Certain government documents are published primarily for administrative or operational purposes, but the large majority contain information of vital significance to individual citizens and groups of citizens. Taken as a whole, government publications provide authoritative and up-to-date information covering almost every field of human knowledge and endeavor.

B. The Need for a National Program to Improve Access

An inability to cope with the mounting flood of publications at all levels and in all branches of government has resulted overall in grossly inadequate, inefficient, and often wasteful methods for providing document/information access to the using public. The tasks of storing, retrieving and utilizing government-produced information becomes more difficult and expensive each year as the information explosion continues. A wide range of public and private agencies and individuals are concerned with this growing problem. Committees of Congress, the Government Printing Office, Federal, state, and local agencies, professional societies, librarians and document specialists, and publishers have been in the forefront of efforts to bring order and accessibility to this burgeoning storehouse of information. In particular, the ALA Government Documents Roundtable (GODORT) and SLA committees have initiated numerous task force studies and recommendations for change. Notwithstanding the energy and great resources that have been applied in recent years to make government documents more widely accessible and useful, however, there continue to be pressing problems to which urgent solutions are needed.

No complete statement of needed improvements can be made which would apply equally to Federal, state, and local levels of government publications without taking into account the peculiar characteristics and problems of each. The commonality of origin as official publications does not extend to issues of availability and access. No library in the country currently is obtaining anything like a complete set of Federal, state and local documents. Holdings of Federal government publications, even among the approximately 1,217 depository libraries, are not comprehensive and in most cases documents selected represent less than one-half of the Federal documents annually available from the Government Printing Office. Only a small portion of publications issued by the states is acquired outside of the state of origin, and the average library has been able to do little with regard to local (city, county, etc.) publications. The wide diversity of practice among the different governmental units in the printing, distribution, and announcement constitutes a special challenge to librarians in the selection, acquisition, and servicing of collections matching the potential needs of their clientele. Basic to a solution of these problems is consideration of the long-range role in terms of information as well as document delivery.

C. Role of Libraries in Providing Document/Information Services

The role of libraries, including academic and other research libraries, public and special libraries, is central in the process of communicating government produced information to an informed public. Libraries in varying degrees store and make accessible a broad range of Federal, state, and local documents (sometimes also U.N., foreign, and international). More importantly they provide indexes, guides, and reference services that constitute means of finding specific documents or information contained in the vast volume of documents. They attempt to maintain complete bibliographic control, i.e., identification of individual documents in their diverse collections. They also act in many respects as nodes in a switching network that makes available via regional depositories documents not held locally. Through computer networks and data bases identifying useful reports and other government documents, many libraries actively supplement more conventional library materials, and thus contribute to the full range of information services required by an informed citizenry. The library as a rich source for supplying government documents/information to the public is further discussed throughout this paper.

Government documents are only gradually achieving full recognition by library administrators as potentially rich sources of advanced information in almost all fields. Somewhat neglected in the past, government documents departments now need to contend for increasing attention and a larger proportion of library resources.

D. Underutilization of Government Publications in Libraries

(1) Measurement of Uses and Needs - It is widely accepted that government documents collections in libraries receive very little usage, although there is a lack of firm data to support this assumption. Libraries typically do not provide a special category for government documents in their circulation statistics. Exceptions occur in the case of large libraries which have separate documents departments,

but few of these keep detailed records. Further, there is almost a total lack of published use studies of government publications. In 1972 it was reported that a search of the literature since 1943 revealed no study showing use characteristics and needs related to government publications. In the case of libraries having documents departments that keep separate reference and circulation records, the data recorded by one library is unlikely to be compatible with those kept by another because of the lack of common standards of terminology and measurement. Subsequent studies of academic libraries showed widespread lack of awareness of the existence of relevant documents and lack of sophistication in using indexes and other tools of potential value.

(2) Factors Limiting Use - The apparent low level of use of government documents, except for selected large research libraries, has been attributed to a number of factors including lack of publicity, difficulty of access to information contained in documents, poor indexing, few reviews, and insufficient staff to maintain and service the collections properly. Basic to all such deficiencies is widespread lack of appreciation of the potential value of documents. This problem is frequently compounded by inadequate staff training. In libraries having separate documents collections, the documents departments normally have low visability and more often than not do not have direct contact with the principal reference and reading rooms. Since traditional methods of

cataloging are uneconomical to apply to large collections of government publications, government documents, except for a few key reference volumes, are not reported in the public catalog. Libraries which integrate government documents with other library materials provide single-stop reference and delivery services, but in most cases are likely to be more selective in the documents which they receive and incorporate in their collections.

The lack of awareness of the existence of relevant documents is the most often cited reason by the general public for lack of use. GPO inspectors of depository libraries have reported they "found little evidence among citizens of the community that they were aware the services of a depository library were available." Libraries have available to them a number of ways in which government documents can be brought to the attention of potential library users. These include special announcements, exhibits and displays, handouts, and publicity in the news media. GPO has recently undertaken a widespread publicity program to promote public knowledge of the existence and value of Federal government publications, but ads carry few references to availability in libraries. It is important that every means possible be directed to publicizing the valuable information resources contained in government documents. Other suggestions for promotion of awareness and use by the public have begun to appear in the professional literature. The typical depository library has been grossly neglectful of such opportunities in the past. Additional comments on this historical deficiency and possible solutions are included in Chapter VI, Proposed National Center for Government Publications.

(3) Benefits of Shared Cataloging - The advent of network shared cataloging and the availability of GPO-LC produced catalog tapes and cards offer for those libraries able to use them new opportunities for service to their publics. Processing and service of state and local documents are also affected in many libraries, as described later in this paper. Cost-benefit factors need to be determined by each library, based on its own resources, collections, and user requirements. Full utilization of shared cataloging initially will prove of great benefit to some libraries and a prohibitive cost to others. The GPO has also held out the possibility of centrally produced shelf-list cards. In the long term, however, most libraries are likely to adopt shared cataloging successfully for government documents at all levels in order to increase efficiency, reduce waste, and provide faster service.

E. Relationship of Government Publications to Archival Practice

(1) Unique Characteristics of Government Publications - Basic to an understanding of the issues and needed improvements in government policy with respect to government documents is recognition of their unique characteristics, as contrasted

with the conventional literature of books and journals on the one hand and archival materials on the other. Until recent years government documents at all levels, Federal, state, and local (as well as documents produced by foreign, UN, and international agencies) have been treated primarily as public records of government administrative or operational activities and only incidentally as information resources. Increasingly, however, a significant portion of the output of all government agencies consists of publications which report for the information of the citizens the results of study and research conducted in the process of fulfilling the functions for which the agencies were established. This type of material has great potential for valuable public service by libraries and information centers, but full achievement of this goal requires for most libraries major organizational, procedural, philosophic changes of a far-reaching nature. It is noteworthy that as late as 1973 Federal library surveys conducted by the U.S. Office of Education record government documents in terms of linear feet, and not as physical items which describe all other library materials.

(2) Emphasis on Information Content - The current trend to a primary commitment to users, in terms of objectives and in terms of service, has brought government publications activity through a state of transition from its archival

background of public records administration to an emphasis on accessibility to information content. During this state of change, taking place with increasing intensity over the past 30 years, government publications have had few standards and generally accepted definitions. In 1962, as a part of the legislation regulating the depository libraries program, Congress finally affirmed that government publications are "Informational matter which is printed as an individual document at government expense or as required by law."

(3) The Archival Heritage - The archival heritage from the past, with its ambiguities of provenance and diverse and incomplete bibliographical control, is a mixed blessing for government publications viewed today as an important informational resource. For many libraries the decision to follow the principle of archival arrangement has provided a practical way of identification, shelving, and servicing large numbers of varied formats of government documents which did not conform to standard library practice and could not be accessed according to traditional library concepts. However, the resulting failure to catalog, list, index, publicize, and distribute government publications on the same basis as conventional library materials raises a formidable, although not insurmountable, problem for both the document specialist and the potential user.

The lines of demarcation between government documents as public records and government documents as informational matter are likely to remain blurred because both types of materials are considered official documents. Only occasionally on the Federal level, as in the transfer of the GPO Public Documents Library to the National Archives, and in a few states, have jurisdictional disputes risen over the disparate responsibilities of archives. Their "primary responsibilities are in the area of records administration rather than research assistance" although in the recent past new concepts of greater access to records have broadened this viewpoint. In contrast, libraries emphasize a wide range of information services, including open stacks for browsing, and provide effective reference service, access to data banks, and document delivery.

Libraries and archives represent related and essential public service functions and should be viewed as complementary, not competitive. The last decade of liberalization of archival access and use underscores this point. The development of computer-based centralized technical processing, together with on-line capabilities via national networks, make close cooperation imperative between libraries and archives in their mutually reinforcing services to the public.

F. Major Challenges to Library Administration

It is widely believed -- although it has not been proved -- that government documents are less used in libraries than any other class of publications. Frequently the image projected is that of benign neglect, with government documents collections lacking insufficient staff and resources for effective utilization. It is significant that several major academic and research libraries, as at the University of California, Berkeley, have recently made a comprehensive re-examination of policies, procedures, collections, and services affecting their government documents departments. This kind of thorough going self-study is long overdue at many libraries, including those with integrated as well as separate collections, but it is essential if government documents are going to gain a level of document utilization commensurate with the enormous social investment in the system.

There can be little doubt that government publications will increasingly play a more active role in communication between government and the public. The library function as a principal intermediary between the government as producer and printer and the public as user and consumer must be expanded, strengthened, and made cost effective. The alternative to enhanced library service of government publications is increased reliance on other information-based institutions, such as the numerous Federal Information Centers, leaving the library the functions of document delivery. This, however, would not be a satisfactory solution for several reasons, primarily because the dissemination of government-produced information would then become further separated from the mainstream of conventional literature issued by non-government sources.

Among major issues to be resolved by library administrators in the effective management of government documents collections, whether separate or integrated, are at least the following:

(1) Utilization of the Collection - Library administrators need to consider government document collections as information resources on an equal basis with books and serials, to the extent that they are integrated in information services, whether or not shelved as separate collections. The relationship between the documents collection and other library collections should be that of a single resource in meeting user needs. The key to a good government documents collection is integration into the mainstream of library information service. Promoting greater library user awareness of the government documents collection should extend beyond full cataloging to aggressive reference service and to every means possible to publicize the useful information contained in public documents.

(2) Selective Acquisition - Collections of documents should be carefully acquired in a manner designed to fit the needs of both current and potential users. Use records should be kept. Needless to say, the accumulations of large numbers of little-used documents for prestige purposes only should be avoided. Such abuse has implications beyond the particular library situation inasmuch as printing, distribution, and library handling costs are also affected. As pointed out later in this paper, the [illegible] Federal depositories (of which 50 are regional all-inclusive collections) are the logical building blocks for a documents/information network as proposed in the National Program.

(3) Controlled Growth of Collections - In the future many libraries large and small will be faced with hard choices involving zero growth for document collections as well as for conventional library materials. There will be need for greater emphasis on weeding and selective acquisition of government documents in order to avoid congestion in processing and servicing and in storage space. This factor necessitates continuing review and revision of category distribution needs from GPO, state, and other government sources. It also points up the necessity for a systematic weeding program, balancing user and space needs with ultimate reliance on the network to speed sharing of resources from the nearest holding library. In the past

of GPO or other government issuing source, guidelines should be established to ease the regulations for discarding government documents in low demand or containing obsolete information, e.g., similar to the practice followed by the land-grant depositories of the Department of Agriculture.

(4) Input to Computer Data Bases - Continuing attention will also need to be given to the nature and quality of materials inputted to computer data bases. Elimination of the ephemeral, trival, superceded or duplicative documents will better serve the information user. Only in a reduced number of regional depositories and in libraries of record, such as the proposed National Center for Government Publications, should an attempt be made to be complete. Otherwise, the librarian and the user in a short time stand a good chance of being overwhelmed by the mounting flood of documents issuing from all levels of government, resulting also in long and unused computer printouts of holdings.

(5) Documents on Microforms - The degree to which the Federal, state, and local governments decide to publish in microforms will have important cost-effective implications both for issuing agencies and for libraries, including savings in initial publication, handling costs, and shelf space. This assumes microform documents are acceptable to library users and are accompanied by adequate bibliographic aids and indexes. Improved microform readers and reader-printers, and their location for ready access, are a

prerequisite to effective use for government documents as well as for other types of library materials on microform. On the Federal level the current GPO micropublishing pilot project is discussed in Chapter III. Microform development for state and local documents is reported in Chapter IV.

(6) Librarian Input to Producers - Librarians should individually and collectively provide input to both the public and private sectors to communicate their needs and those of their clientele with respect to improved publication, indexes and other reference guides, equipment needs, etc. With the numerous public and commercial services available and planned, in the field of government documents, librarians have a responsibility to determine user needs, identify problems encountered with indexing, and encourage programs which would further bibliographic control efforts. Because of budgetary constraints most libraries are currently assessing the value and costs of the many services currently produced. The resulting scrutiny means that they will be more selective in what they purchase and questioning the need and effectiveness of both existing and new products and services. Greater librarian input to producers would benefit all concerned.

(7) Aggressive Reference Service - It is generally agreed that no modern library can give adequate reference service without access to government publications. They

are reliable, up-to-date, and highly useful sources of information, on practically every subject of interest to the general public, the research worker, and the technical specialist. They provide an indispensable supplement to conventional library resources of books and journals.

There is no class of reference material whose value to the user is so dependent upon skilled and personalized reference service by the library staff. Few libraries, however, can afford to provide aggressively maximum reference service necessary to assure useful public access to the growing size and diversity of government document collections. The basis for library shelf arrangement for Federal documents is usually the Superintendent of Documents (SuDocs) classification which follows the organizational structure of the Federal government in the grouping together of the publications for the various departments, bureaus, offices, divisions, etc. State and local government document collections also generally adhere to this archival-based practice giving rise to a multiplicity of special classification schemes. The complex and lengthy SuDocs notation, possibly in conjunction with other special classification schemes, frequently is confusing to the documents user and requires personal assistance given by librarians to individual readers. Fortunately, the development of automated bibliographic data bases will eliminate the need for all the disparate, non-uniform classification schemes now used for state as well as Federal government documents.

In order to provide effective access to government documents, librarians should be encouraged to be aggressive in their relationship with all users, including scholars, specialists, students as well as the general public. The rising importance of providing increased reference staff for the documents collection, however, will require internal reallocation of scarce budget resources to documents reference service which many libraries may be unable or unwilling to make under current financial stringencies. Computer indexing and searching systems, such as the Guelph system referred to later in this paper, and better reference tools, are likely to cure many of the headaches of users, but in the long term the inexperienced user will continue to have difficulty of direct access without aggressive and personalized reference service.

(8) Budget Allocations - During this period of stable or declining budgets, library administrators have hard decisions to make in the reallocation of funding for library materials and personnel brought on by spiraling costs. Although government documents have not compiled an impressive record of past use, their rising and potential value to a wide range of clientele deserve a careful re-

assessment when library staff and support positions are shifted or eliminated. Fortunately, on the materials side most government documents are "free" (to depositories) or available at relatively low cost. With new commercial services available and planned, librarians should determine user needs, identify problems encountered with services, encourage selective weeding of unusued materials, and participate in programs which would further bibliographic control efforts, e.g. GPO production of shelf-list cards, shared cataloging via OCLC, and recent microform developments. Cost reduction measures and cost-effectiveness management are necessary corollaries of budget restrictions.

CHAPTER II

PRINTING AND PUBLISHING RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

A. The Jungle of Distribution Systems

At the Federal level, the government has been generous in the distribution of its publications, both for personal use and for consultation in depository libraries and in other library collections. Large-scale distribution to individuals is made free by members of Congress, and to a limited extent by Executive Agencies, including processed or non-GPO publications. Additionally, several agencies sell their publications direct, or maintain their own depository systems, particularly specialized materials such as research reports, maps, patents, and census information.* The Superintendent of Documents is the designated sales agency for publications bearing the imprint of GPO only, ordered by mail or sold over the counter in about 25 government-operated bookstores throughout the country.

(1) Need for Coherent and Comprehensive Policy - No unqualified statement may be made regarding the types of publications available only through the Superintendent of Documents, or regarding publications not distributed or sold by that agency. Thus, the same publication is sometimes

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*The various depository systems are discussed in detail in Chapter III, including also agency regional offices, commercial suppliers, Federal Information Centers, and other sources of government-produced documents/information.

available for distribution by two or more agencies and may be sold by one and sent free by another. Government publications have become a vast and tangled growth fed by GPO and over 350 contract and field printing plants, plus unnumbered agency R&D contracts turning out reports. The ordinary citizen is confused and frustrated by this mine of valuable government information to which it is difficult to obtain access, and once located--to carry the analogy still further--requires patient digging on the part of the consumer.

The availability of Federal government publications to libraries needs to be considered in relation to the overall availability of Federal publications to the general public. The utilization by some agencies of special depository systems or regional office collections or depositories further complicates the hodge-podge of availability systems. An analysis of the numerous and diverse sources for obtaining Federal documents by individuals directly, and by libraries providing public service, reveals the need for a coherent national policy for the sale and other distribution of government documents.

(2) Major Methods for Distribution of Federal Publications - Although the total numbers of documents distributed free or by sale are impressive, there is no rational and comprehensive scheme of distribution to assure availability to the public. Overall, GPO annually distributes over 80 million free publi-

cations on behalf of Congressmen and by Federal agencies. Millions more free copies are distributed directly by individual Congressmen and by Executive Agencies. In 1976:

. GPO sold by mail or through its 25 bookstores more than 10 million copies of Federally produced publications.

. GPO distribution to the 1216 libraries in the Federal Depository Library System included about 27 million copies of publications.

. Additionally, some 10,000 other public, academic, and special libraries purchased documents selectively for their clients at average price increases of about 200%. Although document sales to libraries are said to be currently holding up, it is likely more and more libraries, with static or declining budgets, will forego purchasing new government documents or will turn to requesting free copies of such documents from already overworked Congressional and Executive Agency offices.

(3) Requirement for Legislative Action - What is important is not that knowledgeable librarians and individuals are able to obtain documents without charge, while those less adroit must purchase them at increasing cost. The central concern is that there is no logical and widely understood system for national distribution of government publications which the citizen user or the average librarian can depend upon. Accessibility to valuable government-produced

information should not be subject to the present maze of multiple, confusing, and little-known distribution practices and sources to which only the most informed and persistent can find their way.

What is needed is legislative action by Congress to provide [illegible] clear and consistent Federal policy to insure access to government information at reasonable cost to individuals who wish personal copies of documents, and at the same time freely made available for use by all citizens through an improved and expanded Federal Depository Library Program. Such legislative action properly implemented would confirm the principle that all citizens have the right to full, objective and timely information concerning the public business.

B. Role of the Joint Committee on Printing

The Congressional Joint Committee on Printing (JCP) was first created in 1846 by Congress intent on remedying the irregular and sometimes corrupt printing practices which existed during the first half of the 19th century. This Committee is still in existence and has been a significant factor in the betterment of printing and distribution practices. Its influence extends beyond the GPO and contract printing to control of printing and publications management service in all agencies of the Federal government. Indeed, every five years the agencies must apply to the Joint Committee for renewal of their licenses to operate their field printing plants.

The Printing Act of 1895 consolidated the laws relating to public printing and documents distribution, and also established a permanent Joint Committee on Printing and created the position of Public Printer as head of the GPO.

The Joint Committee on Printing, in effect, is the Board of Directors for the GPO. The Committee consists of the three members from House Administration including the chairman, and three members from Senate Rules including the chairman. The Committee meets at least annually when the position of Chairman of JCP is elected. The post usually is rotated between the House and Senate. Operationally the Committee functions through the Chairman and a staff of 15. Under Title 44 of the U.S. Code, the Joint Committee on Printing may, "use any measures it considers necessary to remedy neglect, delay, duplication, or waste in the public printing and binding and the distribution of Government Publications."

The Joint Committee on Printing has further authority to determine the functions and services performed by the GPO including the significant task of making documents available to the public. This is done primarily through two programs: the Sales Program and the Depository Library Program. The latter program is discussed in more detail in Chapter III.

Potentially, the Joint Committee has the responsibility and authority to bring about orderly and effective systems of public distribution and access affecting all Federal publications. In recent years it has taken several steps in that direction, such as extending the definition of printing to include micropublishing activities and has cautioned heads of departments to "maintain under their dierct supervision a central printing and publications management service with responsibility for the conduct of coordinated program controlling...the utilization of multiple copy microform methods...and control of duplicated matter." On another front it has barred the private sector from initial publication of government publications and has prohibited their copyright for private gain, as discussed in Chapter V.

Within the past two years the Joint Committee has expanded its small staff by two, including both a library specialist and a staff generalist who advise the Committee on microforms and micropublishing. The Chairman of the JCP also expressed the concern of the full Committee about the "documents distribution program of the Government Printing Office, especially in light of the increasing costs of Congressional printing and binding." The expanded staff of the Committee has been vigorously active and productive in a number of areas such as shared cataloging between GPO and LC and the Federal agencies. They have been instrumental in getting Congressional committee prints, contract and grant reports, and GAO studies into the system. They have also focused on other publication and library-related problems within GPO, including improvements in the *Monthly Catalog*, the Publications Reference File, and mini catalogs generated from the data base such as the new HEW catalog.

The Joint Committee on Printing, with the cooperation of the Executive Branch, will need to enlist the best efforts of all concerned parties in both the public and private sectors who can contribute to the development of a rational new program fulfilling official requirements, as well as those of the information-dependent American public. Neither the GPO, Executive Agencies, the library community, nor the publishing industry has the broad perspective nor the resources and competence single-handlely to design a solution or to research the broad system-planning necessary.

C. Role of the Government Printing Office

The U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO) serves as the primary printer and distributor of the vast and growing number of documents which result from the activities and research conducted by the Federal government. Each year the Federal agencies spend many billions of dollars on studies and research, most of which lead to new and useful information of benefit to the public. Fulfillment of the printing and distribution requirements of the Executive Departments and Agencies is a principal function, but service to the Congress has always been GPO's foremost responsibility. The GPO is also charged by law with making government documents available to the public. This is done primarily through two programs: the Sales Program and the Depository Library Program, as noted earlier. The uncertainty surrounding public distribution of Federal documents, however, underscores the high priority need for development of a coherent and cost-effective program for assuring efficient and effective availability and access.

The significant task of making Federal documents available to the public is overshadowed by the enormous job of printing and the procurement of printing done by the Government Printing Office and its contractors, which is now projected at a ten percent annual increase. Many have observed in recent years that it is too much to ask of GPO that it be the nation's printer, sales agent, operator of the Federal Depository Program, and also bibliographer.

Suggestions are inevitably made that the entire Printing Act of 1895, although amended many times in the intervening years and updated through interpretations by the Joint Committee on Printing, be changed or replaced to reflect the realities of the situation. Printing and publishing needs and requirements of the Legislative and Executive Branches have altered substantially, and new technologies and new concepts of public service have changed with the emergence of government publications as a major national information resource. In some respects there is an analogy between need for the revision of the Printing Act of 1895 and the recent general revision of the Copyright Law of 1909. Each has been outmoded by events and by the new technologies.

What clearly is needed is that the Joint Committee of the Congress, in concert with other concerned legislative and Executive agencies and professional groups, initiate a comprehensive review and appraisal of all elements of the programs providing for the availability and accessibility of U.S. government publications. The need for total systems planning grows constantly more acute. The mounting pressures for an overview of government information availability and control have been building in recent years, despite widespread approval of vigorous actions taken by the new GPO management team installed in early 1970. The preceding years of poor performance in many areas have been reversed to a large extent by recent improvements. The 1977 appraisal by the General Accounting Office, Government Printing Operations Improvements Since 1970, noted numerous improvements in printing policies and management including service to the public. The report also noted some areas where further improvements are still needed.

Several basic issues remain unresolved, however, regarding the role of the GPO in the printing and publishing responsibilities of the Federal Government. These are well summarized in a report of an Institute on Federal Printing, Publishing and Information Functions held at American University in May 1977 and later republished in the Congressional Record. The key findings and recommendations were: (1) There is need for a clear and consistent Federal information policy.

(2) Title 44, U.S. Code needs revision. It is outdated and reflects the "influence of [illegible]th century printing technology." (3) Legislative and executive branch printing/publishing should be administered separately. (4) The Government Printing Office takes a "beleaguered" stance. "GPO officials seem to over-react to questions and challenges. This posture exacerbates the natural conflict which exists between Congress and the Executive Branch." (5) It's time for a closer "system" examination of Federal printing, publishing, and information functions which are interrelated, but are clearly "out of sync" at present.

The above comments stemmed principally from representatives of the Executive Branch who were very critical and dissatisfied with the present system under which "printing/publishing is the only Executive Branch function controlled and administered in detail by a Congressional Committee and its operational agency." This constitutional issue has been raised before without result.

In July 1977, the Legislative Branch Appropriations for FY 1978 carried an allocation to the Joint Committee on Printing of $500,000 to make "a comprehensive study of the organization, policies, systems, and processes of the Government Printing Office." This study is now underway and is scheduled to be completed by September 1978. A similar study was proposed in 1976 by the out-going Chairman of the Joint Committee on Printing, and funds were appropriated ($300,000), but the JCP did not at that time contract for the study of GPO operations.

D. Non-GPO Publications and the Report Literature

(1) Non-GPO Publications - In modern times, large-scale reproduction and distribution of official publications outside the central Government Printing Office first came into prominence in the late 1930's with the proliferation of Federal agencies under the New Deal. For the most part such documents were reproduced by duplicating equipment such as mimeograph, ditto, etc. After World War II photo-offset technology and the growth of field printing plants increasingly led agencies to avoid the high costs of GPO by printing their own documents or under contract, especially for small press runs. By 1960 there were 350 approved agency field printing plants and GPO officials were estimating that up to 80% of agency printing was non-GPO and non-depository production.

Although the Depository Act of 1962 required agencies at their own cost to furnish copies of non-GPO titles for depository distribution, the number did not increase significantly until after 1973 under vigorous enforcement. The acquisitions problem became moot in March 1977 when the Joint Committee on Printing finally gave their blessing to the GPO request to convert non-GPO documents to microfiche for depository library distribution. A new JCP regulation requires agencies to supply only two copies of their outside printed publications to GPO, in lieu of the full number (normally about 600) needed to supply depository libraries.

Before this change in policy, membership in the L.C. Documents Expediting Project (which has since declined) was virtually the only means of ensuring some measure of coverage for these publications. The Readex Microprint commercial publishing program provided non-depository publications from 1956 as listed in the Monthly Catalog.

The GPO director of Library and Statutory Distribution Service has indicated plans to distribute 6,000 additional non-GPO titles on 3 million microfiche to depositories in 1978. These titles would come from two sources: agency produced documents and a selection of significant documents from the 50,000 print orders processed by the GPO Regional Procurement Offices. Non-GPO documents will normally be available to depository libraries only on microfiche.

This new and welcome step taken by the Joint Committee on Printing and GPO holds promise of enlarging public access to Federal information, but much study and planning will need to be done by both the GPO and the receiving libraries or lese the ensuing confusion and congestion could have the end result of further impairing public access to vital government information. As the late Senator Hubert Humphrey observed our current governmental information system is overburdened and "many individuals can't handle the volume or, more importantly, differentiate between the relevant and the junk."

Effective bibliographic control, proper equipment and a good reading environment, plus aggressive reference service, are prerequisites to user satisfaction. Additionally, for the uninitiated users, each library will need to provide orientation and training programs to overcome possible user resistance. (Documents on microfilm and their impact on the depository program are more fully discussed in Chapter III).

(2) The Reports Literature - An entirely different set of problems affect another segment of non-GPO documents issued as technical reports by such agencies as the Defense Documentation Center (DDC); NASA Scientific and Technical Information Facility; Department of Energy; Department of Housing and Urban Development, (HUD); Department of Transportation; and the Census Bureau. In total, GPO has about 100 consigned agents throughout the government that sell and/or distribute studies, surveys, maps and other publications, mainly in the form of research and technical reports. Additionally, the Educational Resources Center (ERIC) coordinates the availability of research reports in education, and the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) acts as a government-wide collection and sales agency for reports. Among these information services the Federal government has placed under individual agency control several million technical reports increasing at an annual rate of 100,000 titles, and has made copies of these reports available to large separate constituencies either by sale or through special depository arrangements. In the latter area, for example, HUD operates three types of document depositories around the country.

The jungle of distribution systems at the Federal level is no where more evident than in the dissemination of technical reports. (The need for a coherent and comprehensive policy regarding government publications overall is discussed fully in Chapter II of this paper). Commonly, each agency distributing its own reports started as a mission-oriented operation concerned with a limited body of information and with a limited clientele. This is reflected in the substantial differences in their operations that have developed during the past 25 years. The results have been confusion, sometimes duplication, and, not surprisingly, underutilization.

a. Significant Issues Affecting National Bibliographic Control of Government Reports - Recognizing that the reports literature constitutes a serious and growing problem for public access to government produced information, the National Commission in its program document has stated that "the development of common standards, consistent policy, and greater coordination in this area is crucial to a truly effective National Program." Basic to the achievement of these ends is clarification of Federal legislative, administrative and judicial constraints affecting the orderly publication, bibliographic control and establishment of an easily accessible system of document identification and delivery.

Legislation of several Federal agencies authorizes them to collect and disseminate their own scientific and technical information. Agencies interpret differently what should be classed in this category. Such legislation encourages Federal agencies to hold back documents from NTIS or GPO depository distribution. Circular 25 of The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) instructs agencies to recover full cost for providing certain government services and property. This circular does not clearly address all the questions related to service charges for document sale or library use. Service charges of agencies vary from token charges to those aimed at full cost recovery. NTIS has interpreted its charges for government reports to fall in the last category. As a result, Federal agencies charge different prices for the same documents.

The achievement of national bibliographic coverage is not likely to come about without the leadership of a National Center for Government Publications vested with administrative policy control over extra-agency publication and distribution. Central administrative policy control would need to be mandated by Congress, or else validated by joint Legislative-Executive agreements under which involved agencies would operate as delegated agents of the National Center with respect to standards for bibliographic control and extra-agency distribution of its technical reports. The relationship of the National Center to NTIS would be similar in nature and scope, except that the administrative policy control of the National Center would in this case also extend to pricing policy.

b. Proposed Revision of Public Law 81-776 - In order to clear up long standing controversies with regard to NTIS charges for services provided "for the special use and benefit of private groups and individuals" as distinct from "the general public" --- this and related matters would need to be resolved by Congressional revision of Public Law 81-776 (1950) which constitutes the charter for the present-day NTIS. Guidance to all agencies producing technical reports might well be incorporated in the same legislative action, covering criteria for agency printing-publishing, bibliographic control, and distribution to assure an easily accessable system for documents identification and delivery, consistent with the National Program for library and information services.

Within the scope of this paper, it is not possible to encompass the numerous and complex problems barring equal and effective public access to the reports literature. Technical reports are in some ways a field apart from traditional government publications and deserve separate and comprehensive investigation.

E. Government Information in Non-Print Media

(1) Information on Machine-Readable Data Files Produced by Government Agencies - There are few guides or reference tools to the several hundred, perhaps thousands, of Federally produced machine-readable data files and little, if anything, which describes files produced at state or local levels. There is no central producer or distributor, such as GPO, for machine-readable data files, which are highly fragmented throughout a wide variety of agencies. This makes access by the public to such information almost impossible, except to those potential users who are likely to know a given file exists.

In the recent past there have been widespread efforts to improve the quality of both files and their bibliographic documentation. Guides to the holdings of several agencies have been published. The U.S. Bureau of the Census and HEW have been active among individual agencies producing guides to data files and special tabulations. The HEW Inventory of Federal Data Bases Related to the Measurement of Poverty is undoubtedly the forerunner of many such topical collections in the future. Government-wide source guides to information on publicly available data have been published by the National Archives and Records Service and by the National Technical Information Service (NTIS). As a natural further development in this rapidly growing information resource, the Process-Produced

Data Action Group of IASSIST (International Association for Information Services and Technology) is currently preparing a "Directory of Directories."

Availability and access to government information in publicly available machine-readable data bases is clearly of growing importance. Incorporation in the national network(s) of bibliographic information on data files produced by the government, as well as by the private sector, is essential to the National Program. A prerequisite is the establishment of standards for bibliographic identification of data files, which will require national, and international, coordination through cooperation of producing agencies within the total government structure.

(2) Government Audiovisual Materials - Government agencies produce a variety of audiovisual formats such as motion pictures, videotapes, slide sets, audiotapes, and multimedia kits which are available for loan, rent, or purchase from the National Audiovisual Center, a division of the National Archives and Records Service. This Center provides a central clearinghouse for Federal government produced audiovisual materials which convey timely information in a wide range of distinct subject areas of public interest such as energy, safety, business and economics, social sciences, medicine, allied health, aviation, space technology and vocational education. In distributing Federal audiovisual materials, the Center has a responsibility similar to the functions of the Superintendent of Documents,

GPO, for the sale of government publications.

The public availability and accessibility to government information in the audiovisual format faces perhaps to an even greater degree than conventional publications, the twin barriers of awareness of existence and incorporation in the mainstream of information use.

F. Bibliographic Access to Federal Documents

The Federal bibliographical apparatus for the cataloging and indexing of U.S. Government publications was established by the Printing Act of 1895, which as noted earlier brought about a general consolidation of the laws relating to public printing and documents. The Superintendent of Documents was directed to prepare three indexes or catalogs: the "comprehensive index" which became the respected *Document Catalogue* and in later years covered other government agencies as well (1893-1940); the consolidated index of Congressional publications was named the *Document Index* and covered the reports and documents of Congress from 1895 to 1933 when it was discontinued as an economy measure. The chief characteristic of these two basic cumulative catalogs was their emphasis on numerical checklists of documents and schedules, together with identification of title and series. The *Monthly Catalog of U.S. Government Publications* remains as the only bibliography of the three provided for in the Act of 1895. In the early years it was important as the sales catalog of GPO. With the approval of the Joint Committee on Printing, the *Monthly Catalog* since 1947 has attempted unsuccessfully to serve the dual purposes of a sales catalog of Federal publications and a comprehensive bibliographic and indexing tool.

Currently the GPO also publishes the monthly *Selected U.S. Government Publications* which highlights the more popular documents for purchase by individuals, libraries, and other organizations. Additionally, from its developing Ohio College Library Center (OCLC) data base, GPO expects within two years to have the capability to produce an accurate and complete sales catalog for public use. Also, a new assist to acquisitions librarians is the *Publications Reference File*, an up-dated microfiche tool originally developed for internal use of the Sales Program but recently made publicly available. Taken together, these new sales aids, one for public use and the other for library acquisitions, will free the *Monthly Catalog* in perhaps multiple forms, to fulfill its public awareness function. Additionally, nearly 300 subject bibliographies are published free, as is a popular *Consumer Guide to Federal Publications* which condenses sources and publishing systems.

The application of computer techniques in the production of the *Monthly Catalog* has improved its timeliness and its indexing capability, which have been main sources of librarian and user complaints in the past. Similarly, inputting to the OCLC data base offers some advantages of shared cataloging, although there is still lack of general agreement on cataloging rules for government publications, with many librarians calling for a separate section in the proposed revision of the Anglo-American Cataloging Rules. GODORT has under preparation a cataloging manual for documents which should help produce some uniformity in the interpretation of the rules.

The cost of maintenance of a card catalog for government publications, whether integrated or held separately, is beyond the resources of many depository libraries which for the most part have continued their abbreviated shelf-lists.

Other library collections in more sophisticated environments have participated in COM or computer-printed book catalogs. Still others have public searching of on-line catalogs in keeping with their overall advanced systems or networks.

The *Monthly Catalog* is an evolving publication and has surmounted many of the numerous shortcomings which have plagued it over several years.

Problems of coverage, format, arrangements, indexing, time lags, etc. have been largely overcome, but further improvements and extensions are needed. Foremost among these are:

(1) Government periodicals (about 2000) often contain useful and unique information, now listed by title but not indexed by article in the annual serials supplement to the *Monthly Catalog*. Three major commercial indexes currently index about 40 percent of the titles, but librarians cannot integrate government periodicals into their collections as a whole, either bibliographically or physically, without comprehensive coverage by the *Monthly Catalog*.

(2) Extension of coverage to non-print formats, including audiovisuals, magnetic tapes, etc.

(3) Coverage of a number of GPO-printed Congressional documents not currently under bibliographical control.

(4) Clarification of the responsibility of GPO and NTIS for publication and/or indexing technical reports and certain other types of non-GPO documents in order to prevent unnecessary duplication, and to provide reliable access to potential users.

(5) Most importantly, top priority should be urgently given

to full exploitation of the data base for Federal publications inputed to OCLC, and later as feasible to state and municipal documents as well. SDI and other current awareness services and publications, subject bibliographies, up-dated reviews, and similar public use tools should be developed creatively keeping in mind the specialized and diverse nature of government publications. Their physical and bibliographical integration into the mainstream of information resources should, of course, be the guiding objective.

In the opinion of some, the GPO has acted prematurely in attempting to mechanize a large archival-type bibliographic system which could be restructured to provide a range and sophistication of tools more useful for public access to government publication/information materials. The change in the Monthly Catalog to this MARC format is certainly a step forward, however, and may provide the flexibility needed.

Automation, of course, does not in itself remedy the lack of overall planning to meet changing user needs for government publications/information. Studies of user needs and the diffusion and use of information for democratic decision-making should be a prerequisite to major changes in the bibliographic apparatus. There is also need to consider that Federal documents bibliographical control cannot stand alone without addressing problems of articulation with document and information systems at all levels of government, and without taking into account the need for bibliographical compatability and some degree of integration with other national information resources.

C. Pricing Policies

Last year the Congress required the Government Printing Office to make its documents sales program self-sustaining. (In recent years sales revenue has reimbursed the GPO for about one-half of the costs of documents sold). As a result, prices for Federal documents during the past five years have showed drastic price increases ranging up to 1000%. In addition, GPO has--in effect--barred subscription agencies and book dealers from handling its products by announcing more restrictive rules on bulk order discounts and direct mail distribution. The GPO explained its price increases by noting the rising costs for labor, material, and overhead including postage, incurred in printing, warehousing, and distribution.

There is evidence that cost is a significant factor in the acquisition of government documents by some 15,000 non-depository public, academic, and special libraries who purchase documents selectively for their clients. It is these numerous medium and small size libraries, as well as individuals in their communities, who are being penalized most by excessively high prices. Libraries are ordering less and it is costing them more. To cope with the budget squeeze, libraries are turning increasingly to cost reduction methods which deprive many citizens of needed public documents and information, or are requesting free copies from already overworked Congressional and agency staffs.

ALA has strongly supported a suggestion offered early in 1976 by GPO to the House Legislative Appropriations Subcommittee that some discount should be considered for special groups such as schools and libraries which cannot purchase needed government publications at GPO's sharply increased prices. A case in point was the House Committee's policy declaration that there should be no subsidy of the Federal Register, a basic public information resource, and that it should be priced so as to recover its full subscription cost, estimated to be several times over its present level of $50 annually. The proposed increase was not adopted.

Numerous complaints from the public about the sharp rise in GPO prices for sales documents resulted in a request by the Joint Committee on Printing for an inquiry by the General Accounting Office. The GAO report released in late 1974, substantially verified the basic financial policy of the GPO that sales revenues should recover full costs, although certain changes in the pricing formula were questioned.

There is considered to be justification of full cost recovery for providing certain government services where the private use outweighs the public benefit. This distinction was pointed out by a recent Supreme Court decision on cable TV, which ruled that FCC must determine what portion benefited the general public and what portion benefited the general public and what portion represented value to the direct recipient.

In one instance, the records of government activity are intended for the general information and education of the citizens in our society; in the other, different value perceptions are applied to documents primarily useful for private benefit or profit. Accordingly, the concept which considers that publication of government documents should be put on a self-supporting basis should be carefully appraised to assure that the public interest is not abridged by price increases which restrict their availability and access for the general public. This policy would appear to apply with few exceptions to all GPO printed documents. It would not apply to certain categories of information products distributed by NTIS, mainly technical reports prepared under government contract, which may lead to new or improved processes or a new product for the market.

In such areas of specialized library services, which satisfy the practitioner's need for special information for private benefit, user charges appear justified and are applied by some libraries. In this regard, the different characteristics of such documents, including those distributed by NTIS, are discussed separately in Chapter III of this paper.

Establishment of an equitable pricing policy for the different kinds of government documents and the purposes they serve, weighing the private use against the public good, must be dealt with, and it will require the best efforts of all parties who can contribute to a solution. This should involve the Congress, the Executive Agencies, GPO, the library community, publishers, and, most important of all, the American public on whose behalf--and expense--the information in all government publications was gathered in the first place. What is clearly needed is the development of a comprehensive but selective pricing policy for government documents shaped in the best interests of providing needed information to citizens consistent with other priorities for increased Federal funding.

The history of government pricing formulas for publications has been a matter of uncertainty, change and confusion. Currently, the GPO has developed a formula to recover full cost of printing as stipulated by law without the former practice of adding 50% to the cost to determine a sales price. The new pricing methodology is designed to identify costs more closely with the type of publication. As a result, price reductions have recently been announced for subscriptions to certain Federal periodicals printed at lower cost under contract outside GPO.

CHAPTER III

THE FEDERAL DEPOSITORY PROGRAM: IMPLICATIONS FOR CHANGE

> "The depository library system is a long-established cooperative program between the Federal Government and designated major libraries throughout the United States under which certain classes of Government publications are supplied free of cost to those libraries for the purpose of making such publications more readily accessible to the American public." -- Federal Depository Act, 1962.

The Federal Government is the largest single producer and distributor of publications/information in the United States. Each year the Federal agencies spend many billions of dollars on studies and research projects which lead to new information of benefit to the American public. At present, much of this information is printed directly by the Federal Government and distributed in official publications through the Government Printing Office, the Federal Depository Library Program, the National Technical Information Service, and through a variety of separate formal and informal arrangements made by the originating agencies. Much of this document/information material, perhaps 50 percent, appears later in journals and books, and more recently as audio-visuals and in computer tape format as well.

was certified by the General Printing Act of 1895, when administrative control of the depository system was transferred from the Department of Interior to the Government Printing Office.

The only major revision in recent times was made by the Depository Library Act of 1962, which provided for the addition of one depository per Congressional district and one per Senatorial designation. Other changes in the law included a provision for the distribution of non-GPO imprints through the depository system, and a provision for two Regional Depositories per state assigned certain administrative responsibilities.

In recent years as a result of the patching of the system and piecemeal addition of depositories by law or by Congressional designation, gross inequities in distribution of Federal Government publications continue in terms of population growth, geographic coverage, and types of library service. In Hearings of the Committee on House Administration held in 1956 it was noted "the outmoded depository law...is in need of major revision in order to best serve present-day needs." This failure to revise the law in a fundamental way was attributed by the Chairman of the Joint Committee on Printing to be due to lack of quantitive, summary documentation of the inadequacy of the depository system at that time. In later Hearings leading to the Federal Depository Act of 1962, the Chairman of the JCP further stated:

"The depository law itself is rather an ancient one and I presume the reason nothing has been done about it before is because the people most affected by it have never brought any

As a major national information resource, government publications at all levels -- until recently relatively neglected and underutilized -- need to be developed, strengthened, organized and made available to the maximum degree possible in the public interest, as projected in the National Program. A principal means of assuring public access to government publications/information has been through the channel of depository library systems at both the state and Federal levels. The central importance of libraries to the distribution system for government publications has been formally recognized for more than 100 years.

A. Strengths and Weaknesses

(1) The Federal Depository Library Program administered by the GPO represents a system of depository libraries more extensive than exists elsewhere in any national jurisdiction for providing access for citizens throughout the country. Included at present are 1217 selective depositories and 50 Regional Depositories which receive all documents made available to depositories and which have certain administrative responsibilities to the regular depositories in their areas of jurisdiction.

The Depository Program grew out of a number of unconnected special acts and resolutions of Congress, beginning in 1813. In writing the early laws, Congress assumed it was a good thing for a democratic government to distribute its official publications to key libraries throughout the country and to be made accessible to through libraries to the public. This legislation pressure to bear on the Congress to do anything about it."

The resulting legislation in 1962, although in effect doubling the number of eligible Congressional designations and authorizing Regional Depositories, did little to correct the most absurd aspects of the present system which permit vacancies to exist in some districts where they are not needed while opportunities are closed in other districts where they are much needed.

Efforts to equalize access to Federal Government publications have not been limited to simply increasing the number of depositories. In addition to Congressional designations, depositories have also been legislated for particular classes of libraries, e.g. Federal agencies, State Libraries, libraries of U.S. Courts of Appeal, and more recently, libraries of accredited law schools. In the latter case Congress waived its traditional right of designation and authorized the Public Printer to review and approve requests.

The many complaints about the effectiveness of the Federal Depository Library Program have not all turned on the method(s) of designation and their resulting inequities of access. In 1974 the new Public Printer raised certain other fundamental questions to the Advisory Council to the Public Printer on Depository Libraries. He stated that he felt "we are not really sure that the depository library system is really the best system at all, or whether it is really a good one." He went on to ask the group: How well is the Depository Program working? Should it be abandoned, replaced, or improved?

Satisfactory answers to these basic questions are still not forthcoming, although the GPO Library and Statutory Distribution Service has since made significant improvements in the internal operations of the Depository Program. The large backlog of claims, undelivered documents, and unwarranted delays have been eliminated. Broader improvements have resulted from the initiative and encouragement of the Joint Committee on Printing (as noted in Chapter II) and the Advisory Council to the Public Printer on Depository Libraries, which was re-established in 1973. Regular meetings of the latter group have led to several recommendations for improvements of the Depository Program, including strengthening of the inspection system and, more importantly, the recommendation of revised Standards and Guidelines for Depositories.

How effective is the Depository Program in carrying out its principal objective? The answer can only be a matter of conjecture, because there is lack of reliable descriptive and statistically significant data upon which to base policy decisions, or to plan and implement new and more stringent Standards and Guidelines for Depository Libraries, which would need to take into account the realities of limited space and equipment, and inadequate staffing.

It is essential that the question of effective public use of depository libraries be resolved in terms of current use and potential for the future. Fragmentary information at hand, reinforced by the relatively small proportion of public libraries designated depositories (23 percent), their generally small collections (26 percent have one-fourth or less of items available), together with information provided by GPO inspectors, is the basis for some concern for access by the general public. A somewhat higher level of use by faculty and students of academic institutions is reported in the professional literature. In only a few cases at major university and research libraries does use of Federal government publications appear to approach a reasonable level compared to other classes of library materials. The almost complete lack of use data, however, prevents more accurate projections.

Three principal functional objectives of depository library service stand out:

(1) document/information access by the general public

(2) use of government documents in the conduct of research and studies, occurring mainly in academic and other research libraries

(3) educational use, i.e. for current and continuing education of the general public, enrichment of instruction in colleges and universities, and to a lesser extent at primary and secondary school levels.

The fundamental question that arises in relating the above derived functional areas to the composition and service record of the 1217 libraries currently designated Federal Depositories is whether the basic job of the Federal Depository Library Program is being well served, i.e. "to make government publications available for the free use of the general public." (44 U.S.C. 1911) In the Hearing preceding passage of the Federal Depository Act of 1962, there seemed to be wide agreement that libraries of academic institutions have greater need for government documents than other types of libraries. This generalization was supported by both the Superintendent of Documents and the Chairman of the Joint Committee on Printing. It seems clear that, given the extensive and intensive information requirements of faculty and students, academic libraries presently experience heavier demands for government documents than public or special libraries generally.

There are at present 1217 depository libraries, composed as follows by type of library (1974 data): college and university libraries - 65%; public libraries - 23%; state libraries - 7%; special libraries - 1%; and Federal government libraries - 4%. The gap was further widened in 1976 when a total of 26 depository libraries were newly designated; of these 16 were academic and only 2 were public libraries. Additionally, information gathered in a recent survey indicates that among academic depository libraries, 90 percent circulate documents to their academic clientele and only 35 percent circulate to the general public as well.

The above facts help to explain the relative low state of public library service of government documents, and also the recurring question as to whether the Federal Depository Library Program is meeting its principal objective of serving the general public. Instead, it would appear that the public has turned increasingly to their Congressmen and the originating

Federal agencies for copies of Federal publications, to the extent of 80-100 million copies provided free of charge on their behalf by GPO. An additional 50-60 million copies are sold annually by the GPO to the general public including about 30 million copies to business and industry. What evidence exists as cited earlier raises serious questions concerning the effectiveness of the depository system as presently consituted to best serve present-day needs.

When viewed in the context of massive informal distribution systems, large-scale sales programs, and numerous special depositories and agency regional offices, it is understandable that the ALA Ad Hoc Committee on Depository Legislation in 1976 termed such barriers to the effectiveness of the Federal Depository Library System "a crazy-quilt of government growth and dispersion without central policy regarding dissemination of information." The government's programs of printing, publishing, and distribution of publications appear seriously deficient when measured against the information requirements of a highly-educated, industrialized, complex, and space-age society.

B. Restructuring the Depository/Information System

In recent years several proposals have been put forward to redesign or restructure the Federal Depository Library System. Some have stressed the need to have a system more responsive to modern needs, i.e. planned to take into account factors of population growth and economic, and social change over the last 100 years. Others have been concerned that perhaps the concept of a depository system is an anachronism in modern times and that a fresh approach should be studied which would have a primary focus on access to government produced information, as contrasted to present emphasis on document delivery and storage systems.

(1) Paucity of Firm Data - A number of recent enquiries and planning studies of the Depository System have bogged down through a lack of firm data relative to its characteristics, condition and effectiveness. Repeated references to the need for a comprehensive and detailed study of the Depository System have been made as a prerequisite to its reform and possible major improvements. A comprehensive picture of the basic characteristics of depository libraries is a sine qua non to re-structuring the system for effective participation in the information network(s) envisioned under the National Program.

Congressional Committees and various professional groups and task forces set up under ALA and the Government Documents Round Table (GODORT) have reported their frustrations at coming to grips with the inadequacy of the present depository system because of the lack of quantitative, summary documentation.

This insufficiency was noted in hearings leading the Depository Act of 1962, and in later activities of the ALA Ad Hoc Committee on the Depository Library System and by the ALA Legislation Committee in recommending as the first assignment "developing and collecting comprehensive data on the existing system to substantiate the need for change." More recently, in 1975 the need for such a study was implicit in the establishment (and later dissolution) of the GODORT Committee on National Systems.

The revelation in 1977 by the Microforms Task Force (GODORT) of the serious lack of microfiche readers, printers and duplicators should have come as no surprise. Similarly, the discovery by another recent survey that several depositories (about 6) possess fewer than the statutory requirement of 10,000 volumes. This raises again the question whether a fixed standard for depository libraries should be enforced, and if so, whether smaller libraries serving the public could be accommodated on the basis of their service potential. GPO has had the benefit of Inspection Reports since 1974, and has recently taken steps to provide a statistical summary of the results of the 1973 biennial questionnaire to depository libraries. Meanwhile a research team at Indiana University will soon publish its comprehensive survey findings of the basic characteristics and condition of all types of depository libraries. Such a detailed picture may be helpful in evaluating standards and guidelines for the distribution of government publications, particularly with regard to the various types and sizes of depositories in promoting access to this wealth of literature.

(2) Survey of the Depository Library System (1956). Varying methods of improving the Depository System have been recommended by the ALA Public Documents Committee in the past, and in the late 1930s it appeared that a comprehensive survey would be conducted. It was not until 1956, however, that the ALA Committee, in cooperation with the House Administration Committee, undertook the long-awaited survey. The results of this significant survey were published by the House Committee in 1956.[9] They deserve the careful attention of those concerned with the conduct of studies being proposed today. A 3-part system of depositories was recommended:

a. At least one regional depository in each state, to maintain a complete collection and to provide interlibrary loan. (Regional libraries could substitute microcopies for originals).

b. Selective depository libraries to be allowed latitude in the discard of unneeded documents.

c. Information libraries - generally small public and college libraries which might select so few documents that their continuance as depository libraries might be open to question.

(3) Recommendations of the ALA Ad Hoc Committee (1973). The Ad Hoc Committee on the Depository Library System was created by ALA in 1972, and its report was made a year later. The recommendations were approved by ALA as incorporating the principles of much needed reform in the Federal Depository

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[9] Benjamin E. Powell and William H. Pullen, "The Depository Library System--An Examination with Recommendations for Increasing its Effectiveness," Hearings, Revision of Depository Library Laws, U.S. Congress, House, Committee on House Administration, 85th Cong., 1st Sess., (1958), p.171.

System. However, on the recommendation of the ALA Legislation Committee, the Ad Hoc Committee was further directed to develop and collect comprehensive data on the existing depository system to substantiate the need for change, to develop an estimate of costs for implementation, to make recommendations for changes needed, and to communicate with other units of ALA, including the state chapers, in order to enlist their aid in support of improvements in the depository system.

In its final report early in 1976, the Ad Hoc Committee on Federal Depository Legislation cited its continuing concern for the inadequacy of the depository system, but acknowledged it had not been able to initiate studies of the depth and scope required to approach problems at the source. It passed the torch to GODORT and pleaded for "national leadership in a sadly neglected area of librarianship."

Although the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Depository Library System generally were considered somewhat utopian at the time, two principal proposals have survived: a National Depository Library System comprising a network of regional and local libraries, and additional funding for regional depositories in order to help them carry out their mission. A National Depository Library (or Agency) would have responsibility for bibliographic control, standards of performance, and supervision of depository libraries.

Awareness of the two major study efforts cited above is essential to an understanding of the complexity and difficulty of the problems encountered in planning for the needed reform in the Federal Depository System. (See Appendix for proposed alternative structure).

C. Administration and Inspection

(1) Superintendent of Documents

Administration of the Federal Depository Library Program is a responsibility of the Superintendent of Documents, which he delegates in part to the Director of the Library and Statutory Distribution Service. There are three mechanisms which may be used by the Superintendent of Documents to insure that depository libraries are carrying out their responsibilities under law:

(1) Instructions to Depository Libraries, issued irregularly and last revised in 1975. Although this new edition claims to be a manual of instructions, it can hardly be considered a detailed procedures manual on how to operate a depository library collection of Federal government publications.

(2) Inspection program inaugurated in 1974, with inspecting criteria emphasizing the adequacy of depository practices. The availablity of all depository documents to the general public and how this access is provided is one of the most important aspects of the inspection. The current inspection program aims at on-site inspections every 2-3 years.

(3) The biennial investigation report questionnaire which is required by law. The questionnaire

> according to many librarians can be answered without revealing the true conditions in a depository which may require an investigation, and is consequently open to change. In the future it is expected that a summary of descriptive and statistical data will be made publicly available, beginning with data collected in 1975.

It was recognised during the Hearings on the Depository Library Act of 1962, that there were many depositories which did not serve the public need due to the small size of their collections, or failure to properly service the collection to make it available to the public. Apparently there is no case on record, however, of the depository privilege being withdrawn because of failure to meet the prescribed standards. It is significant, however, that an average of 5 libraries have annually dropped out of the program in recent years. The Powell and Pullen survey in 1956 reported that 25 percent of the depositories selected less than 25 percent of items available. The GPO biennial report for 1975 and a recent survey by the Indiana research team indicates that the proportion of depositories at this collection level has now risen to 28%. Therefore, it does not seem very meaningful to evaluate the effectiveness of depository library services to the country or to a state or a Congressional district by counting the number of depositories.

The Depository Library Act of 1962 briefly describes the responsibilities of Regional Depositories as follows: provide interlibrary loan, reference service, and assistance to depository libraries in the disposal of unwanted publications.

A major cause for concern today is the situation in those states (13) in which regional library services are not available.

Should state library agencies be designated Regional Depositories, as proposed for the National Program in Chapters IV and VI of this paper, they would be considered partners by the Federal Government in developing mutually-supportive depository library programs.

(2) Role of the Advisory Council to the Public Printer on Depository Libraries

The Depository Advisory Council first officially met in 1973, but there had been an advisory committee for ten years previous. The Council, a group of 15 librarians, has been responsible for recommending many of the improvements made recently in the Federal Depository Library System, including among others the new format for the GPO Monthy Catalog, improved bibliographical control of government documents, micropublishing, and the preparation of proposed Minimum Standards and Guidelines for the Depository Library System. The absence of a central planning and research staff in the office of the Superintendent of Documents places the Advisory Council frequently in the position of initiating proposals instead of reacting and advising on programs planned by the Superintendent of Documents. This is a significant deficiency affecting the development of long range improvements in government publications as they relate to the National Program for Library and Information Services.

The current revision of the proposed Standards and Guidelines, prepared by the Advisory Council, recommends a number of major changes in evaluating the performance of existing depository libraries, but retains a fundamental defect in that it continues to adhere to a strictly institutionalized approach to public availability and accessibility of documents. Under this philosophy the free deposit of government publications is limited to libraries of a certain size, i.e. 10 or 15,000 volumes of conventional materials. An increase to 15,000 titles rather than volumes was recommended by the Advisory Council.*

Library service of depository collections is often considered a function of library size. In order to assure maximum public access, however, provision must be made for the remaining 10 - 15,000 small and medium sized libraries serving the public, most of whom must purchase documents from the GPO, or in the case of the knowledgeable, obtain them free from a Congressional office or issuing agency. The GPO estimates approximately 80-100 million copies of free government documents are distributed annually on behalf of Congressional offices and Federal agencies.

Guidelines and Standards need to be approached from the standpoint of promoting optimum public accessibility with due regard to cost-benefits. Elements sometimes missing or de-emphasized include evaluation of public service performance, the number and professional competence of the staff, and circumstances of public availability and use. It is essential also that minimum use records be maintained and user needs of the public or academic community be surveyed periodically. The proposed Guidelines should also reflect a greater concern about reference service, which frequently is the key to public access. Although there are general instructions to provied reference service and accessibility for use by the public, coverage of reference lacks the detail and performance requirements that other sections in the Guidelines have. It is generally agreed that depository libraries need to be aggressive in their relationship with the general public if information transfer is to be successful.

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* "Guidelines for the Depository System, as adopted by the Depository Council to the Public Printer" was published by GPO in October 1977 and distributed to depositories after this section was written.

In an historic meeting in October, 1977, staff members of three concerned Congressional committees conferred with representatives of the ALA Ad Hoc Committee on Federal Depository Legislation concerning suggestions for changes in the parts of Title 44, U. S. Code, which govern depository libraries. The proposed changes reflect Standards developed by the Advisory Council to the Public Printer on Depository Libraries. The next step will be to bring presently suggested amendments to the ALA Legislation Committee for its approval prior to legislative drafting.

D. Relation to the National Networks

The Federal Depository Library System, in its present or revised form will continue to play a major role in providing basic distribution and access to Federal Government publications, with components of the system participating as nodes in the national networks. In the latter case, it is envisioned that there will be at least one Regional Depository Library in each state, most likely identified with the appropriate state library agency or commission. Each State Regional Library normally would participate as a node in the national network. The Regional Library in such case would be jointly funded by the State government and by the Federal government according to a formula related to Federal-State functions carried out. Each state would be responsible for its intra-state depositories and for collection and bibliographic control of local government publications. Resulting bibliographic data would be inputted to the appropriate regional and national networks. Similarly, the state library agency would also carry out the responsibilities of a Regional Depository Library, including the provision of interlibrary loan, reference service, and assistance to Federal depository libraries, e.g. in discarding documents, within the jurisdiction of the state. It is expected in most states there would be some correspondence between the state and Federal depositories. This overlap would of course simplify administrative responsibilities and would benefit state citizens in their use of Government publications at all levels, Federal, state and local. Also, it would provide a mechanism for a sharing of network costs for this extended coverage.

E. Documents on Microfilm

(1) The Government Printing Office Micropublishing Program

The Joint Committee on Printing in March 1977 approved the GPO micropublishing program as follows:

(1) To convert to microfiche, as necessary and as requested by individual depository libraries, that category of publications identified as 'non-GPO documentation'

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(2) To convert to michrofiche, as necessary and as requested by individual depository libraries and when savings in costs are clearly demonstrable, that category of publications identified as 'GPO documentation.'

The communication further stated that "nothing in this authorization shall be construed as establishing any form of a microform sales concept."

This authorization followed a review of the test results of the GPO microform pilot project, utilizing the Code of Federal Regulations as a test vehicle. The test project,which was widely approved, had been preceded by a survey of the then 1200 depository libraries to determine interest/utility for specific categories of publications in microform. Through the survey, GPO learned (a) that 83 per cent of the libraries would prefer film over paper copy publications in at least one of the 3,000 categories; (b) that on the average the depository libraries could use about 26% of the normal supply of government publications in microform; and (c) the materials most in demand in microform are those of a statistical, archival, or research - not topical nature.

The Depository Library Council to the Public Printer endorsed the GPO proposed microform program, and noted the program places greater emphasis on securing and distributing microform copies of non-GPO documents. As indicated earlier in this paper, an estimated 6,000 non-GPO publications would be shipped the first year (1978) amounting to about 3 million microfiche to all depository libraries. These publications will be obtained direct from Federal agencies duplicating their own documents and others will be screened from more than 50,000 print orders annually produced under contract to the 14 GPO Regional Procurement offices.

The authorization of the Joint Committee on Printing and the GPO statement of its plan for the micropublishing program leave unanswered many questions on availability, coverage, variety of format, and bibliographic control. Another question concerns possible library support for microfiche reading and printing equipment, which a recent survey by the GODORT Microforms Task Force reveals is lacking in many depositories, particularly in public libraries.

Finally, the program as outlined raises questions concerning the relative roles of the GPO and the private sector with regard to micropublication of government documents as part of an indexing service or compilation. The second listed category of Joint Committee authorization for the GPO micropublishing program in reality places few, if any, restraints on coverage by GPO, and apparently makes existing private sector micropublishing projects involving Federal government publications highly vulnerable to replacement. The denial of a microform sales concept to GPO loses much of its meaning for the private sector when the primary depository market of 6-12 hundred libraries is pre-empted by GPO. Conversely, such action by GPO might leave the remaining non-depository libraries (about 10,000) without a source of supply of microfiche copies.

What appears indicated is a need for GPO to consult with the private sector on areas of secondary publication and repackaging which would not become subject to GPO further development if the private sector provides effective public service at reasonable cost. The Joint Committee on Printing would provide legislative oversight to assure adequate protection of the public interest while at the same time encouraging the private sector to contribute its expertise to the improvement of accessibility to government produced information.

(2) The Impact of the Program on Depository Libraries

In general, the effective application of micropublishing to government publications at all levels, can have far-reaching and irreversible consequences for the improvement of public availability and access to government publications/information, as envisaged in the National Program.

In the Federal area particularly, the effective utilization of microforms in an enlarged and reformed depository system is an essential element of a national program to provide adequate access to public information. There are many problems, however, which stand in the way of effective use of microforms by libraries, apart from the availability of adequate viewing and reproduction equipment. These are chiefly problems of organization, bibliographic control access, and physical environment.

Space problems in many libraries make microforms the only viable approach to a well planned government document/information retrieval system. In the past, space restrictions have often forced massive weeding of documents or dramatic cutbacks in the selection of depository items. A recent investigation, on a grant supported by the Council on Library Resources, has reported depository librarians need more space, want all their activities concentrated in one space, and want all government document microforms at hand, and not in a seperate microforms department.

Microforms undoubtedly will play an increasingly important role in all types of library systems, involving microfiche, and other microforms such as COM products. Micropublishers and librarians alike must take steps to assure the use of information stored in microforms is not inhibited either by physical barriers to access or by psychological barriers created by treating microforms as something unusual or peculiar. Needless to add, however, they will require special treatment and handling, including orientation and training of library staff if the needs and problems of the user are adequately anticipated. In this connection, the GPO has reported a manual for depository libraries on receiving and servicing microforms is being prepared.

Even among large university and research libraries there is recent disturbing evidence that the erosion of user resistance to the use of microforms is far from complete. An example is Princeton University which has initiated a broad program to develop more extensive microform service and to improve user and staff attitudes toward the medium. An award from the Council on Library Resources will be used to support the training of staff and the orientation of faculty and students to the use and availability of microforms. According to the Princeton experience, it is necessary to develop a positive climate for the use of microforms before a library can consider relying on them in place of hard copy.

The Depository Library Council, facing the realities of publishing economics and attempting to balance varying interests of the depository libraries, recommended initially to GPO titles or series for microform conversion which appeared to be based principally on cost considerations, i.e. costs of printing, binding, and shelf space. It was the intent of the Committee to avoid recommending titles requiring high frequency use and extended consultation. In the long term, the impact of the GPO microfiche program will be determined in large measure by selection of titles in terms of potential use within the libraries, as well as by availability of necessary reading and printing equipment.

It should be noted the recently issued Final Report of the National Study Commission on Records and Documents of Federal Officials comments on the Federal Depository Library Program and recommends the GPO be supported in its efforts to utilize microform reproduction. According to the Commission, the introduction of microforms would not only help in obtaining bibliographic control over Federal publications produced outside the GPO, it would also allow the entire depository distribution system to operate more efficiently and economically.

(The impact of microforms utilization on the availability and accessibility of state and local documents is discussed in Chapter IV).

F. Role of Federal Funding

(1) Financial Plight of Depository Libraries

In a report on the depository library inspection program for 1973-1976, the Superintendent of Documents noted that recent years have witnessed a general upgrading of depository libraries. Major factors for improvement were the availability of funds, which provided a necessary ingredient for change, and a steadily growing volume of useful government publications. What library inspectors are now observing, however, is the impact of a drying up of funds. In large urban public libraries job freezes and reductions in staff are common. In academic libraries the same impact is being felt. In less severe cases, cutbacks are in paraprofessional, clerical and student assistance. Unfortunately, these actions hit documents librarians especially hard. Their area heavily depends on support personnel.

A recent survey of depository libraries by a research team at Indiana University substantiates the impact of reduced funding for libraries and the reallocation of funds formerly allotted to document collections. Many depository libraries are today supervised by paraprofessional or clerical personnel, in some cases with the part-time assistance of a documents librarian. Libraries with comprehensive collections, including some Regional Depositories, are in the position of managing with 1-3 professionals with part-time support staff. It is significant that "little used government publications" have been identified by the Research Libraries Group as one class of materials generally accorded low priority in competition for space and staffing. (See recommendation for staffing study on page 120).

In summary, most members of the Depository system face severe budgetary problems, and few Depositories are able to allocate sufficient resources to Federal publications to provide all the services they should or would like to. The question arises whether the depository library is a privilege for which the library alone should pay, or whether the library is also providing a service for the Federal Government in the dissemination of government-originated documents and information. In the latter case, depository libraries should be considered partners by the Federal Government in developing and supporting useful patterns of service. Among the benefits which could accrue from assumption of this public responsibility are greater opportunities for improvement in the dissemination of government publications/information and sustained funding through mutually supportive efforts. Federal legislation in support of library and information services should recognize the important role of Federal depository libraries in the National Program for improving access to the information resources of the Federal government.

(3) Funding for Regional Depositories - The question of Federal funding for Regional Depositories should be considered in the context of the assignment of administrative responsibilities as provided in the Depository Act of 1962. As noted earlier, this involves reference service and interlibrary loan to other libraries and assistance in the disposition of their unwanted documents. As delegated agents of the Superintendent of Documents

in the conduct of the Depository Library Program, it appears reasonable that they be partially supported by GPO in carrying out these duties. Should state library agencies be designated Regional Federal Depositories, as proposed in this paper, they would become the logical agencies, in the context of the National Program, to serve as essential building blocks for providing access via the national network to information produced by all levels of government, Federal, state and local.

Whatever its merits as a massive document delivery system, the Federal Depository Library Program appears seriously deficient in fundamental respects: (1) It does not reach large segments of the general public it is intended to reach; (2) It does not make provision for the kinds of library and information services the modern-day public needs and expects; (3) Organizationally, the Depository Library System operates in a printing-oriented environment not conducive to articulation with other government document systems or with conventional library materials and services; (4) GPO does not have a consistent track record with respect to programs of inspection and assistance to depositories; (5) Regional Libraries are often neither situated nor staffed to perform the minimum administrative duties assigned, i.e. interlibrary loan, participation in inspection, and assistance in discarding.

CHAPTER IV

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS OF STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS

A. State Documents

(1) Need for Improved Availability and Access - Like the Federal Government, the states have become involved in diverse and expanding fields as government has attempted to meet more of the social, economic, and environmental needs of its citizens. With the current interest in the new federalism and the increased state responsibility which it involves, this trend is being reflected in both the volume and importance of state government publications. Information produced by government research and studies is central to effective problem solving at state as well as the Federal level.

Historically, state libraries have been very much concerned with the exchange of state publications. The formal exchange of session laws, legislative journals, and reports go back to the early 19th century, and in fact is credited with being the reason some of our state library agencies were founded. In recent years the range and volume of state publications has taken on striking new dimensions and the limited exchange of collected documents no longer meets the information needs of today's legislative and executive agencies and the general public.

The widening scope and importance of state governmental activities today is inevitably reflected in the publications they issue. State governments face many common problems, and their activities are of vital interest to each other. Accordingly, there has been growing concern for the development of effective mechanisms for national as well as intra-state bibliographic control and distribution of state government publications.

In the past ten years a number of professional library groups, state associations such as the Council of State Governments, and other interested agencies have viewed with concern "the chaotic, inefficient and often expensive methods" by which state government documents are acquired and the lack of general exchange of information on common state problems and conditions. In 1966 the ALA Public Documents Committee, including the American Association of State Libraries, declared that Federal and state governments pose pressing problems to which urgent solutions are needed. More recently the pressures for change have accelerated, with associations of state agencies and the Government Documents Roundtable (ALA) taking leadership as noted later in this paper.

(2) Current Efforts for Bibliographic Control - The Library of Congress publishes the Monthly Checklist of State

Publications, begun in 1910, which is the major national bibliographic record of state government publications in the U.S. Various proposals have been made in recent years by professional groups and individual librarians to support, strengthen, and extend the coverage of the Monthly Checklist. More than thirty states have adopted model laws providing for at least one copy of each state publication be sent to the Library. Although of great value as the only national listing of state publications, this LC serial falls short of providing effective bibliographical access to state government publications through lack of complete (voluntary) coverage and because of slow and limited cataloging, and insufficient indexing. Recent adoption of automation procedures has greatly speeded up production of the Checklist. It is noteworthy, however, that fewer than fifty percent of the state documents are retained and integrated in the LC collections. The remainder are discarded or offered to libraries as gifts or exchanges. No inter-library loan is attempted. The Center for Research Libraries in Chicago, with limited staff and an incomplete collection, is currently the only national source for inter-library loan of state documents.

Extended coverage, development of comprehensive collections, improved indexing, and prompt issuance of the Monthly Checklist by LC would require adoption of a new national purpose on the part of LC which could be made explicit via the proposed National Center for Government Publications, together with provision for adequate funding and staff, as discussed later in this paper.

Most of the fifty states publish, with varying frequency and comprehensiveness, through their state libraries or other state agencies official checklists of their publications, which vary greatly in arrangement, items included, and indexing. The quality and coverage of these bibliographic tools range from excellent to poor, but overall they seem to be improving. Additionally, many states have no or sporatic retrospective listings of their official publications.

In brief, current as well as historical records of state governmental activities are difficult to trace because of the present imperfect state of indexing and the necessity to consult numerous other sources. Several states recently have discontinued the issuance of current checklists on a regular schedule and the publication of special cumulations, because of budgetary and staff shortages. There is promise in the future, however, that state libraries will increasingly utilize the growing number of state-wide and regional computer network systems in the efficient production of cumulative checklists of state publications in a MARC format, which permits greatly improved and uniform access to the cataloged data. (This component of state contributions to the National Program is discussed more fully under Chapter VI, National Center for Government Publications.)

(3) Guidelines to Minimum Standards for State Publications - Any national program to assure availability and access of government (state)publications must include wide-spread improvements at the state level as well as on a national basis. Within the states themselves there are inadequate state depository laws and inadequate provisions for bibliographic control of their own documents. Even states acknowledged as legislative and administrative leaders have difficulty providing comprehensive collections of their documents to intra-state libraries.

The State Documents Task Force of the ALA Government Documents Roundtable, in its 1972-74 reports, detailed several areas of concern affecting bibliographic control of state government publications and announced an on-going effort to establish minimum standards. These cover extensive areas essential to state and national bibiographic control of state documents, including legislation, rules and regulations, depositories, distribution, checklists, classification, catalog and production, authority lists, and staff. The Guidelines to Minimum Standards for State Publications were formally approved by ALA in January 1975 and forwarded to the state library agencies. If widely put into practice, the minimum standards would insure improved bibliographic control and access to state publications at the local, state, and national levels of state publications.

The standards are interrelated and need to be considered as a coherent program. Central to their successful implementation is adoption by each state of a depository law and establishment of a central depository within each state to see that the documents are collected, distributed, and placed under effective bibliographic control. Typically the depository law gives legal backing to the state depository system, if not already in effect, and assigns responsibility to issuing agencies for providing the state library agency sufficient copies for depository distribution and for exchange purposes. Several states now have adequate depository laws, and there is reason to believe such laws can be adopted by all states, or amended where necessary to conform to the minimum standards.

Bibliographic control should be carried out by each state using explicit national cataloging and format standards cooperatively developed and coordinated by the National Center. Success of a network of inter-state systems for distribution of key state documents would be dependent first of all upon the cooperation of all state library agencies in promptly furnishing copies of their state documents to the National Center, which would monitor regular exchanges among the states on the basis of standard category distribution lists, such as those developed and successfully used by the National Conference of State Legislatures. These would be updated periodically to reflect changing interests. Needless to add, the transition from present inadequate and irregular inter-state document exchanges to a logical and effective national distribution system would be evolutionary in nature and will not be accomplished over night.

Assuming state publications were collected nationally and bibliographically controlled according to uniform standards, developed cooperatively between state library agencies and the National Center, there would be effective availability and access at the national level to comprehensive collections of state documents not now possible. Utilizing the national network, libraries would be able to search by subject and by author and/or issuing agency whether prepared within or outside the state. Since the proposed National Center would negotiate directly with state library agencies to receive copies of all substantive state publications, coverage would be broadened and made comprehensive. Preparation of the *Monthly Checklist of State Publications* would be further automated to provide complete and up-to-date listings, fully cataloged for the MARC II record, and with adequate indexing. Additionally, authority lists of state agency organizations would enable users to find materials in the card catalog, or via computer network searching, and to use the *Checklist* more effectively. Although classification schemes for documents vary widely among the states, almost any plan for classifying state documents is satisfactory if consistently applied, and can be accommodated to the tagging capability of the MARC record. Further, feedback and revisions would over time operate to produce a reasonable measure of agreement among states on subject headings and authority files.

(4) Coordination of State and National Planning for Improved Access to State Publications - Based on the above stipulations it is recommended that:

(a) Planning for improved availability and access to state government publications should be carried out and coordinated at both state and national levels, with participation by concerned elements in the government and professional communities. Leadership would be provided according to the plan adopted by the National Program.

(b) The overall planning should be undertaken by a legislatively approved agency or organization with national scope and responsibility, e.g., the proposed National Center for Government Publications, Library of Congress.*

(c) The bibliographic control system should utilize the advantages of cooperative cataloging between the state library agencies and the National Center. The cataloging/processing functions would need careful study to determine the optimum balance between state and central responsibilities. With so many states beginning to input state cataloging into national data bases, it is increasingly important that there be practical uniformity. (The GODORT State Task Force has recently developed preliminary guidelines for inputting state documents into data bases.)

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*It should be noted that the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science in its 1975 National Program statement calls for LC to accept a responsibility in the "development of improved access to state and local publications..."

(d) Initial planning efforts should be undertaken within the context of the National Program by a joint committee representing major interests including: staff of appropriate Congressional committees, state administrative agencies, state libraries, the major professional associations, the Library of Congress, and such state leadership organizations as the Council of State Governments and the National Conference of State Legislatures.

(e) Because of the growing importance of state government publications, particularly in areas of social, economic, and environmental studies--many of which are Federally funded--urgent consideration needs to be given to the development of library availability and access systems which will meet the needs of the total user community, i.e., state and Federal administrators, legislative organizations, local officials, researchers, and concerned citizens throughout the country.

B. Inter-relation of State and Local Publications

(1) Scope and Importance of Local Documents - Government agencies below the state level, i.e., counties, districts, cities, towns, etc., (more than 20,000 governmental units) publish official documents in large numbers, including many of direct interest to citizens of the community. In addition to annual reports of operations, budgets, zoning ordinances, and other official records, there are also often studies and surveys in social, economic, and environmental fields which

have an important bearing on local programs and which reflect the greater inter-dependence of local governments themselves. The lack of effective exchange of information among local governments on common problems and conditions has been termed a domestic intelligence gap, which results in widespread duplication of crises and solutions.

In the past libraries for the most part have made no systematic effort to collect and service such documents for their local constituencies. With the growing importance of municipal documents relating to pollution, housing, transportation, urban renewal, crime, and other common problems, the library should play an increasingly important role in providing a central reference or collection point for the servicing of significant state and local documents.

(2) Library Responsibilities in the Collection and Servicing of Local Documents

(a) Issues of public policy, coordination, and new forms of cooperation are involved in the successful development of systems to insure the national availability and accessibility of local documents to the general public. In the absence of library participation this function may go by default or devolve upon elected officials, who have uncertain tenure and who may or may not feel a responsibility to provide such service.

Libraries planning to collect and provide service on local documents should propose administrative orders and ordinances to insure that they become depositories of city and other local documents. Reference lists, public releases, displays, and other means for attracting attention to collections of local documents are an essential first step to effective public service.

(b) Libraries of all types have an opportunity to strengthen their role in the mainstream of community service by providing ready and informed access to local publications. It follows, of course, that libraries have a corollary responsibility for keeping their staffs informed of municipal and county activities and developing a competence in relating local problems and documentary materials to relevant reports and studies issued by state and Federal governments, which frequently have a major impact on local actions. They should also be alive to the need to exchange important studies with libraries of other cities of comparable size and circumstances facing common problems.

(c) In some cases it is not practicable or feasible for a library to undertake building a collection of local documents. In such situations, local governments may develop separate municipal information or reference centers, much in the same manner as the Federal Information Centers operate on the national level throughout the country. To be fully effective such municipal information centers need to establish close relations with local public libraries in order to draw upon conventional information sources as well as information contained in government publications at the Federal and state levels.

A foreshadowing of future developments along this line has been the establishment in San Diego, California, of the nation's only Government Information Center, opened as an experiment in information services and intergovernmental cooperation. In San Diego, the Federal Government, the state of California, the county, and city have joined together and the center is staffed by information specialists including librarians who are fully trained to answer questions about Federal, state, county, or city government. The General Services Administration's Federal Information Centers operating in major metropolitan areas (37) throughout the U.S. have initiated this significant experiment in the provision of government information services at all levels through intergovernmental cooperation. Additionally, residents of 38 other cities are able to avail themselves of the services through toll-free telephone connections to the nearest FIC.

This innovative development has important implications for the national network(s) proposed under the National Program for Libraries and Information Science. It is essential for the benefit of all citizens that public, academic, and special libraries be involved at all levels that library services participate and provide input to such coordinated government information services; otherwise, duplication and waste of resources, as well as insufficiency of public service, will result. The National Program appropriately has assigned this area of responsibility to the Library of Congress, particularly as it relates to more effective access to state and local government publications.

(d) It is essential to effective availability of local government documents that state libraries undertake continuing and aggressive leadership in building central collections of local documents, for intra-state and out-of-state distribution and for sending copies to the National Center, which would serve as a library of last resort within the resource chain. Some few states, like California and Nevada, have already enacted laws which require deposits of local and county documents with the state libraries. This trend to establish central collections of local documents in state library agencies facilitates preparation of central checklists and category assignments or indexing on the state level. State library agencies should have legislative responsibility for indexing, cataloging, input to the national network, and loan of copies not otherwise available.

(e) The National Center and state library agencies should work jointly with the National League of Cities/U.S. Conference of Mayors and other interested municipal and professional associations to establish broad distribution categories for local documents of general interest intrastate and out-of-state. At a later date when a local documents information system is fully functioning within a state, the feasibility of the use of categories for automatic standard distribution among local governments with common interests and problems should be considered.

State libraries, or other appropriate state agencies, should have the responsibility for assignment of L.C. compatable cataloging information including subject headings, which would appear as part of the MARC record and thus facilitate network searches by local government libraries, and other user organizations.

(f) The National Center for Government Publications, in collaboration with state library agencies and professional organizations, should evaluate existing private sector publications and services in the field with a view to utilizing or incorporating their special capabilities into the national program. For example, the privately published Index to Current Urban Documents is making a major impact on the field. Similarly, other publishers are currently working with individual states and on a national basis in the development of bibliographic control, indexing services, and microfilm fulfillment services of state and local documents.

This area will require intensive study and legislative action before the public-private relationship can be clearly defined. There is a pressing need for a new dimension of cooperation between local and state governments, and between the states and the proposed National Center for Government Publications. The Center would perform the essential function of coordination through cooperation, working with state governments and state library agencies to assure useful and cost-effective national access to state and local documents of public interest. It is likely legislative action would later be necessary to implement intergovernmental compacts agreed upon.

(3) Role of State Library Agencies - State Library agencies are the essential building blocks in the development of a nationwide program to improve access to the vast array of useful information in state and local government publications. The state libraries are the logical agencies, in cooperation with the proposed National Center for Government Publications, to assist in the development of policies and programs that will make state and local documents of greater benefit to governmental bodies at all levels and to the people served by those governments. The main responsibility for this

function should be primarily at the state and local levels. This belief notwithstanding, there is an important monitoring and coordinating role that can be played by the Federal government.

(4) Federal-State Funding - It can be confidently expected that the small additional funding necessary to transform the existing haphazard and cumbersome intra-state and inter-state exchange of state and local documents--in many areas practically non-existent--into productive and efficient nation-wide distribution systems of relevant documents, backed up by computer networks and data bases, would pay for itself many times over. Waste and duplication of research and experimental projects (common among states and localities facing similar problems but lacking knowledge of experience elsewhere) have been reported as widespread and costly. Inasmuch as Federal funding currently comprises a substantial portion of what state and local governments spend (about 22%), financial assistance where needed could be made available through Federal matching grants or through defined eligibility in categorical aid programs.

Should state library agencies be designated Regional Depositories by the Federal Government, as proposed in Chapter III of this paper, the added administrative functions of relating collections and services of state and local documents to the National Program would require close cooperation between the Federal government and state and local governments. Such cooperation is most appropriately brought about through Federal legislation. Legislation would adopt as its prime objective equal accessibility of official publications of all levels of government, Federal, state and local.

(5) Role of Library of Congress - The National Commission on Libraries and Information Science in its program documents has proposed a specific role for the Library of Congress in relation to state and local documents:

> Development of improved access to state and local publications and cooperation with state and local agencies to standardize cataloging and other techniques of organization. Potentially useful information in state and local governmental publications is not now widely accessible to users, because it is not uniformly printed, collected, announced, organized, preserved, and publicized.

The Library of Congress is the logical agency to assist in the local development of policies and programs that will make state and local governmental publications of greater benefit to various governmental bodies of the nation and to the people served by those governments.

This paper has analyzed state and local publications separately in light of both common and peculiar manifestations of the same or related problems. Local and state as well as Federal documents are considered an integral part of the overall national network of information resources including government publications at Federal, state and local levels. The commonality existing among all levels of official publications as a valuable national information resource is a theme running throughout the paper.

CHAPTER V

ROLE OF PRIVATE ENTERPRISE IN PUBLISHING AND PROVIDING ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT INFORMATION

A. Opportunities for Providing Improved Availability and Accessibility

In recent years the private sector has played an active role in improving the availability and accessibility of government publications, principally in the areas of indexing, analysis, repackaging, micropublishing, reprinting, and supporting publishing activities transferred from government agencies. The scope and importance of publishing contributions of the private sector underscore the fact that governments at all levels have concentrated on the printing and distribution of documents with insufficient attention given to facilitating public access to their contents. Publishing and dissemination of information, as distinct from initial printing and distribution, is a field in which government agencies should take maximum advantage of publishing capabilities highly developed by the private sector, such as editorial expertise, creativity, and the compilation of ideas which are essential to provide full and open choices to information users from multiple sources.

The problem is complex, however, since the dissemination of government-generated information is a legal responsibility of many Federal agencies, including the GPO and the Library of Congress, either specifically written into the agency legislation, or implied in agency mission statements. This and other issues argue for written rules and guidelines to clarify the relationship between government and the private sector in the publication, repackaging, and dissemination of government-generated information.

(1) Initial Publication

The Congressional Joint Committee on Printing has recently ruled that Committee approval is required before Federal agencies could make available to private publishers "for initial publication" (printing and sales distribution?) any information created at public expense. Few would disagree with this basic philosophy. Three reasons were given to assert the Committee's authority over government publishing. The first was cost, i.e. private publishers generally charge more than the Government Printing Office, although it should be noted that the GPO has dramatically increased prices since 1973. Second, materials published by GPO are automatically made available to depository libraries and to L.C. for purposes of international exchange, etc. The third reason is to assure that materials approved for private publication are handled on a competitive basis.

Private publishers appear to accept the third reason as valid subject to recognition of expertise in particular fields; the second reason is said to be primarily a matter of printing and distributing the required number of copies; and the first reason, based on comparative costs and pricing policies, is challenged on the basis that all related costs are not taken into account, i.e. costs accruing to originating agencies, overhead, taxes, etc.

It may be noted that GPO currently contracts with private printers for more than one-third of its work and that this proportion is increasing. In its first five-year plan, recently announced, the Government Printing Office predicts that the demand for government publications will keep growing at a rate of about ten percent a year, but GPO does not intend to step up in-house production. Instead, commercial printers will handle the extra printing load.

While the Joint Committee theoretically has no jurisdiction over copyright, the Committee has asserted that as a general principle all documents prepared or compiled out of tax revenues should be in the public domain and all Federal publishing should be done by the GPO.* Use of the terms "printing" and "published" interchangeably further adds to the confusion as to the proper roles of the public and private sectors. All the variety of circumstances should be exposed to a public hearing. Otherwise, the Committee objective of encouraging the widest possible dissemination of government information will frustrate rather than aid users to gain effective access to this information.

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*Initial copyright by the government author(s) in certain cases permitted by the new Copyright Revision Law will complicate this situation.

(2) Dissemination of Government Information the Key Factor

With respect to encouraging the widest possible dissemination of information, the combined efforts of GPO and the private sector are needed overall to assure maximum public availability and accessibility to government documents and the vital information they contain. Until recent years governments at all levels, Federal, state, and local, with few exceptions have concentrated on the basic printing and distribution functions with inadequate attention to information accessibility involving efficient dissemination, bibliographic control, indexing and public announcement.

What seems essential is the development of a positive environment conducive to joint cooperation between the public and private sectors and the elimination of even the appearance of adversary roles which can only hinder the further development and exploitation of government publications as an important national information resource.

B. Vulnerability to Government Competition

Government documents comprise a fertile area for the private sector, given the imperfect and somewhat primitive state of bibliographic control, growing public recognition of their importance as an information resource, and the fact that documents, being in the public domain, are not copyrighted as they are in most foreign countries. There is intense competition in the provision of commercial information services, and publishers search out programs in areas which competitors have not entered and for which there is potential demand. The case for commercial publishing of government-derived information should not be misread. In general, the private sector offers the public and libraries selectively what they need and cannot readily obtain through the government.

As noted earlier in this paper, the Joint Committee on Printing in 1977 authorized GPO's Public Printer to convert to microfiche, as necessary and as requested by individual depository librarians, that category of publications known as non-GPO documents. In addition GPO is authorized to convert to microfiche GPO documents, as necessary and as requested by individual depository librarians, "when savings in costs are clearly demonstrable." The Joint Committee also directed the Public Printer to activate the GPO Micropublishing Council, with representatives from both depository libraries and industry. Industry representation includes both manufacturers and publishers.

micropublishers with special expertise in this field heretofore have had little opportunity to consult with or influence GPO in the development of policy in a potentially broad range of micropublishing activities.

Although all would agree that Federal documents of public interest should be made freely available to depositories, government-private cooperation is jeopardized when the government expands without consultation its coverage or operation into areas previously well served by the private sector. Commercial information services affecting government documents are vulnerable at any time to take-over decisions, made without public hearing, which may not serve the public interest equally well.

In the past, a number of significant bibliographic compilation and indexing tools providing access to government information have come from the private sector. These have developed in parallel to the *Monthly Catalog*. Most of the commercial access services combine indexes with microforms. As GPO slowly moves into a micropublishing program for the depository libraries, every private publisher who has developed well-received bibliographic and microform services is vulnerable to replacement by the GPO in the microform area which constitutes the major revenue source for private publishers of combined microform and index services.

For example, a number of Congressional committees recently have agreed as the result of Joint Committee initiative to supply their committee prints on a regular basis for GPO depository distribution. As additional Congressional committees make their committee prints and hearings available on depository distribution, commercial publishers specializing in costly but highly useful analysis and indexing of these materials stand to forfeit the profitable half of their enterprise, i.e., sale of copies of Congressional documents not heretofore distributed by GPO to depositories. Much of the specialized private indexing and analysis efforts, areas where the GPO has no experience, would go down the drain in such case--to the overall detriment of the public good. Optimum availability and accessibility of government documents, not profits for private publishers per se, is basic to the public interest. However, it is not in the public interest in the long term for agencies to duplicate well-functioning private efforts or, for example, replace them with half a loaf, i.e., copy distribution only. Such policy and practice on the part of government, without prior consultation and cooperation with private publishers concerned, undermine private interest in a field where the best efforts, both public and private, are needed to overcome long-standing barriers to improved public availability and access.

C. Need for National Information Policy

(1) The relation between the private sector and government should be complementary and in active partnership; it should not be adversary, duplicative, or competitive. The public benefits from documents and data bases produced by government, and similarly government benefits from the information products produced by private initiative. As a major producer of cultural, social, scientific, technical, and industrial information, in a variety of useful forms, the private sector--both profit and not-for-profit--should not be barred from participation in developing the government information resources of the nation and assuring their distribution broadly to the concerned public.

No single complete criterion or guideline can be stated for all situations and for all levels of government. The development of general guidelines should specify the role of the private sector in particular situations on the federal level, and where possible, with appropriate agencies on the state and local levels. The diversity and number of state and local jurisdictions, their frequent turnover in personnel, and changing printing practices almost defy efforts of the private sector in the development of coherent, continuing publication and access programs for state and local documents.

(2) Public-private cooperation should be extended to setting up standards and guidelines minimizing duplication of efforts and optimizing availability and accessibility. The guidelines should apply primarily to secondary publication (usually micropublishing) and to all access services including indexing and analysis, abstracting, document delivery, and computer-based retrieval systems. The major objective would be to improve bibliographic control so that the public can have more effective access to government-produced information. Public needs in this area require cooperative efforts among the government, the library community, and the publishing industry, each of which has a vital role to play. The National Center for Government Publications, as proposed, would offer its assistance in the formulation and implementation of guidelines at all three levels of government.

(3) Private publishers, both profit and not-for-profit, are interested in the more salable items and often these can be purchased from more than one publisher, thus fragmenting the market. Less popular titles are generally available only as part of a package arrangement. Private publishers prefer to promote standing orders and sales of large sets of compilations. They are not geared to individual sales, except as a special service, or to make available several hundred copies to depository libraries as a counter-

incentive to government publishing, except with government funding assistance, as is also the case of GPO. Additional problems cited by the private sector include the lack of publicity for government publications, few if any reviews, limited incentive for keeping books in print, and a fragmented market. In the recent past, however, GPO has become more active in utilizing public media and journal publicity for promoting greater public awareness.

Much more than conventional printing is involved should GPO undertake broadened publishing functions. A range of publishing capabilities would need to be developed by the GPO, including editorial expertise in indexing, repackaging, promotion, etc. It would be possible for GPO to add competent librarians, editors, and analysts for these functions as well, but at considerable cost in an unfamiliar area.

The GPO still lags significantly, however, behind the sophisticated systems developed by the private sector, as well as by other Federal agencies in providing access to government research reports, both on-line and through abstracting-indexing, and including micropublishing to facilitate storage and retrieval. In the future new types of information services and new technologies also will be needed, such as: alerting services (SDI), a variety of printed indexes and abstracts, on-line data banks, magnetic tapes, audio-visuals, video cassettes, microforms of all kinds, and other new types of print and non-print media.

What is needed is a re-examination of the printing and distribution functions of GPO with a view to differentiation between the massive printing efforts, which only GPO and its contractors--and state and local governments--can handle successfully, and the publishing and editorial expertise found largely in the commercial sector and the not-for-profit publishers including society and university press organizations. As an active partner in the development of needed new and innovative document services, the private sector can contribute reliable and cost-effective methods of obtaining access to government produced information, and at the same time offer improved distribution. Public needs in this area require cooperative efforts among the government, the library community and the information industry, each of which has a vital role to play in disseminating government information.

(4) The public dissemination of government generated information at low cost has been dramatically affected as a result of Office of Management and Budget directives. OMB has set forth the general policy that a "reasonable" charge should be assessed against each identifiable recipient of a document or service from which he derives a special benefit.

More recently, in giving GPO as well as NTIS a directive of self-sufficiency in document printing and sales distribution, Congress has caused some government documents to be priced equivalent to commercial publishing rates or beyond. Radical price increases by the GPO has raised new cost-benefit questions which deserve careful consideration; more recently substantial reductions have been made by GPO, particularly in the case of privately printed documents and periodicals. Pricing policies are discussed in Chapter II, dealing with printing and publishing responsibilities of the Federal government, also including NTIS reports and other non-GPO documents. It seems evident, however, that GPO printing and sales distribution cannot achieve full cost recovery if it is to handle all publications of public value but not necessarily economically viable.

D. Establishment and Implementation of Guidelines

The problem for the Federal and state governments is especially difficult. In order to employ the best efforts and expertise of both the public and private sectors in a common purpose to improve availability and access to government publications, policies will have to be formulated to clarify the relationship between government and the private sector in the production, publication and dissemination of government-generated information. Basic to such policies as may be established is recognition that government has an important role to play, not only in the production of information but with regard to its dissemination, as well.

Rules incorporated in legislative actions will need to serve the following general functions:

(1) Provide a focal point for both the public and the private sector where proposals and problems can receive consideration;

(2) Provide for the initial dissemination of government-generated information to the public at a reasonable charge which will not inhibit availability and access;

(3) Provide information services to the public in a way that will not prevent or limit participation by the commercial information sector;

(4) Determine conditions under which publication by the private sector could save the government substantial costs and provide products of better quality that can be marketed effectively with optimum distribution; and

(5) Provide guidelines which will have some permanence and general applicability so that the private sector will be encouraged to invest in new systems and services.

Basic principles of official policy and operational guidelines would need to be agreed upon at all levels of government, preferably as a result of legislative action if that proved feasible, or statements of principles and evolving practices jointly prepared by the official and private sectors and recognizing the need for cooperative arrangements.

A cost-effective partnership between the official and private sectors is a clear and pressing need if the public is to be well-served. As noted earlier, the problem is complex and will require a great deal of patience and analysis on the part of all concerned. On the one hand, government has the responsibility to fulfill official mission requirements employing the best of the new technologies; similarly, the private sector should have the opportunity to contribute in all areas where the public interest can be best served by their demonstrated expertise. An adversary relationship would only diminish the communications process between government and public.

CHAPTER VI

PROPOSED NATIONAL CENTER FOR GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS

A. Background and Need

It was logical that the growing dissatisfaction and frustration of librarians and document specialists with the ineffective operations of the Federal Depository Library System should erupt during the early 1970s in organized efforts to identify problems and seek solutions on a national basis. It had become increasingly evident that the existing system needs fundamental overhaul and is only partially effective in meeting the goal of providing public access of Federally generated information.

A new beginning was made in 1973 when ALA sponsored the Government Documents Roundtable (GODORT) and also appointed an Ad Hoc Committee on the Depository Library System. The recommendations of the latter group centered on a proposal to expand and strengthen the depository library system into a comprehensive network of local and regional depositories, with a National Depository Library at the head of the system. The Government Information Services Committee of SLA, and the Washington Committee on Information Hang-ups have also conducted inquiries and studies with a focus on the depository library system. GODORT especially has been active in providing leadership directed to solving the technical problems of the depository system, as well as other government publications at all levels.

It is clear there is general agreement that some form of national depository library is a crucial component in the emerging plans of a national network, and there is also concern that further basic improvements in bibliographical control, availability and accessibility are essential to greater public utilization of government generated information. What is at issue is the total re-orientation of government publications at all levels and in all aspects of their issuance, distribution, and accessibility in order to meet the pressing information needs of modern society. Government documents are today a major source of information in practically every field of endeavor and are crucial to informed decision-making.

The trend to a primary focus on information and a primary commitment to users, in terms of objectives and in terms of service, has brought government documents activity through a state of transition from its archival heritage to an emphasis on public accessibility to information content. Recognition of this fundamental and far-reaching shift in emphasis is basic to a consideration of the need, responsibilities and functions, and the configuration of a national documents center or agency, and its role in national networking.

More and more it is recognized that the key problem is organizational, i.e. providing the structure, coordinating authority, and leadership for an evolving national system for assuring availability and access of government documents/information at all levels. The task becomes that of developing a truly national bibliographic approach into a national pattern of information service. A model showing total access to government documents at all levels, Federal, state and local, including roles and functions, was under consideration by a Joint Sub-Committee (of the ALA Public Documents Committee and GODORT), but later abandoned. The failure to develop a capability for total planning in the recent past has been a formidable barrier to the organization and strengthening of government publications/information and services adequate to meet the needs of the public.

Rational development of a nationwide program to assure equal and effective public access to the full range of government publications involves issues of public policy, inter-governmental coordination, and new forms of cooperation at all levels of government within the context of the goals of the National Program. It is evident that solutions to both immediate and long-term problems, in the dissemination of government generated information, require the assignment of new administrative and operational functions on the part of some agency in the Federal establishment, where policies with respect to library and information service activities can be translated into action.

B. Goals and Objective of the National Center for Government Publications

(1) A principal goal would be to assure unrestricted availability and access by all citizens to information of public interest printed or reproduced by governments at all levels:

Federal, state and local, and articulated as well with foreign, U. N. and international documents.

(2) A second goal would be the coordination, via the national network, of access to government produced information in association with the conventional literature. It is essential that government publications with information content be brought within the mainstream of library and information services.

(3) All information material in all types of format produced at government expense should be brought under bibliographic control, to the end of facilitating ready access by the public. Government publications should be an integral part of the emerging national and international bibliographic control systems. Whether a separate national network should be developed for government publication/information produced at all levels - because of their essential unity of official origin, varied format, and large numbers of little used materials - will need to be studied as the overall National Program evolves.

C. Organizational Placement

One of the most important issues to be resolved in pursuing a National Center for Government Publications is determining what kind of permanent operating organization is required for this purpose. Experience to date suggests that the greatest degree of success in the national coordination of government publications availability and access could be anticipated by assumption of coordinating responsibility by the Federal level of government.

In point of fact, the Federal Government is probably the only agency with sufficient resources to effect meaningful cooperation among Federal, state and local governments producing publications/information of public interest. Whatever central authority is eventually established to direct the National Program, the variations of needs and existing levels of government information services and resources are so great as to preclude all but a few agencies to which this role would be appropriate.

Five existing national agencies have been mentioned as possibilities:

(a) The Library of Congress

(b) The Government Printing Office

(c) The Superintendent of Documents (as a semi-autonomous unit of GPO)

(d) The National Technical Information Service

(e) The National Archives

It is not in the province of this paper to determine what agency would be most appropriate for assumption of this responsibility. All alternatives should be thoroughly investigated. Comments are in order, however, as a basis for discussion and later consideration by the National Commission and by all concerned.

It is no derrogation to suggest that the National Archives has a primary orientation to records storage and research, as contrasted to the role of dissemination of publications/information required of the proposed National Center. In a like vein, the National

Technical Information Service by law are merchandisers of specialized information for a fee, whereas government publications cover the entire scope of topical information of public interest and free access.

The Government Printing Office should be reviewed on the basis of its functional performance as a publisher and distributor of Federal government publications. As a printing agency, the GPO should get high marks, as witnessed by the recent GAO report. Its former erratic record as distributor of documents to the Federal Depository Library Program has greatly improved in the recent past. As a publisher organizing and indexing government publications, for equal and effective public access the GPO is simply out of its field. The central fact is that GPO is a printing office, whose primary responsibility is to Congress and whose management of necessity is printing-oriented. An Assistant Public Printer who is also the Superintendent of Documents directs both the Document Sales Program and the Depository Library Program. Although the Library and Statutory Distribution Service has immediate responsibility for the depository program, the overall planning and guidance, the distribution and inspection functions, plus the publication of the Monthly Catalog, rests with the printing management staff who ordinarily have had little or no direct experience with library needs and services. To be sure, the GPO has recruited competent professional librarians for the purely library functions, and is advised by the recently re-created Depository Library Council to the Public Printer. During the recent past the

GPO with the advice of the Council, has undertaken a number of major improvements and is planning a general upgrading of the depository program.

What is lacking for the long term, however, is overall direction of the library functions by an information rather than printing-oriented management. The last ten years have seen a massive increase in useful government publications and a growing public awareness and demand for information from such documents. There have been con-committant increases in the volume and complexity of GPO printing and distribution responsibilities in producing these publications in Washington and in 350 printing plants around the country, plus 14 Regional Printing Procurement Offices. The result has been a dichotomy of function under which the GPO now operates: an attempt to operate the world's largest printing establishment and at the same time develop a sophisticated and responsive library and information program, but subordinate to the printing responsibility.

It does not seem useful or appropriate to comment on the effects of a hypothetical reorganization of GPO which would establish the Superintendent of Documents as a semi-autonomous unity although this possibility has been frequently discussed.

D. Role of the Library of Congress

The Library of Congress is the logical organization around which to build a National Center for Government Publications, because of the breadth of its collections and because it has the potential to assemble a core staff of document specialists to provide national leadership in a program to assure equal and effective public access to official publications of all levels of government, Federal, state, local, and also foreign, U.N., and international agencies.

A National Center for Government Publications is realizable through creation of a new Department at the Library of Congress,* similar in agency structure and relationships to the Congressional Research Service. The CRS was given a new charter and a new name in the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970. As an integral part of the Library of Congress, though created by Congress with certain defined functions and relationships, the National Center for Government Publications similarly should be given the responsibility and the authority to provide national leadership in the field of official publications. The establishment of a large government publications Department would, of course, require a considerable amount of space and organizational autonomy, but the question of LC's assuming the role of a national center for government publications merits serious study. The report and recommendations of the LC Subcommittee on Documents represents a useful exploration of the issues.

As pointed out in the January 1978 report of the LC Task Force on Goals, Organization, and Planning, government publications is an area where the Library has unique opportunities because of laws, executive agreements, and special arrangements with state and other governmental agencies. The Library of Congress would also be in a position to enlist the cooperation of a wide range of agencies and organizations, in both the public and private sectors, including many which rarely involve themselves in government communication with the public.

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*At the Departmental level the National Center would be given the kind of attention and authority in the LC that only Departmental status can confer.

Further comment from the LC Task Force Report is appropriate:

> "The Library should take the lead in organizing cooperative efforts in collecting documents and in advocating improvements in their availability, control, and use. It should encourage the development of comprehensive archival sets of state and local documents in appropriate institutions around the nation. It should urge publication and the acquisition of documents in microform when feasible, and improvements in the cataloging rules relating to documents. In particular, it should cooperate with other institutions to assure that all documents find a place in an appropriate American library. It should also serve as a referral center, directing researchers to the library that holds the documents they need."

The National Center is conceived as initially extending its responsibility to Federal originated documents, and evolving into a complete service covering U.S. Government documents at all levels, Federal, state and local.* Public service operations would also be applied to improving the national availability and accessibility of foreign, U.N. and international agency documents. It is clearly beyond the scope of this paper, however, to identify specific issues or to provide a blueprint for all areas of responsibility and methods of operation of the proposed National Center.

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*At this point it should be noted that the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science in its 1975 National Program statement calls for LC to play a role in "development of improved access to state and local publications..." A possible expanded LC role in this effort is discussed more fully in Chapter IV of this paper.

Identification of specific areas of responsibility and authority of the National Center, together with proposals for necessary legislation, should be determined jointly by the Library of Congress and the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science based upon recommendations of a select study group or national study commission of stature. Needless to say, a representative, permanent Advisory Council to the National Center would be essential to assist in the evolvement of a national system of equal and effective public access to government publications/information out of the present "difficult and bewildering world of government documents" beset by a "crazy-quilt of agencies and requlations," -- as recently characterized by LC and ALA study committees.

E. Documents Handling at the Library of Congress

There appears to be a broad consensus that the Library of Congress is indeed the logical organization in the Federal government to establish and implement a National Center for Government Publications. Some document specialists, however, including officers and members of GODORT believe that present LC document handling practices are seriously fragmented and "there seems to be no real coordination between the acquisitions, cataloging, and servicing of documents...and no focal point for documents reference service." In correspondence with LC, GODORT officials have noted that LC has not acted upon the August 1976 recommendations of its Subcommittee on Documents for establishment of a separate documents unit, to provide a simplified approach "for bibliographic access to LC's vast and complex document resources." Library of Congress officials have responded "the issue of documents at LC is unusually complex, but the moment may have come when new developments are possible."

The key question is not whether LC will give up its traditional practice of integrating documents into the general collection, but whether, in its national leadership role, the Library will establish a separate documents unit, such as a new Department, to develop archival sets of documents. Many believe LC, as the national library serving Congress, Federal departments and agencies, scholars and the public, is the logical choice to collect government publications as fully as possible. LC's role is crucial, and, if functioning as the National Center, would have a tremendous impact on the handling of documents at all levels in this country and abroad.

F. Legislation and Funding

It has been projected that future legislation toward a national network, sponsored by the National Commission, will define the role of the Federal Government, the national libraries and the states; specify the functions to be performed centrally; establish the basis for Federal - state and state -

local matching funding; and designate an agency for implementing the policies of the National Commission. It is anticipated that certain aspects of the establishment and operations of the National Center for Government Publications would require legislative authority and would be included in the overall legislation required by the National Program. In particular, it would be expected the Federal Government would fund state and local library services committed to the Federal Depository Library Program, in return for a commitment on the part of the states to accept, in cooperation with the local governments, a fair share of responsibility of funding library and information services relating to government publications collections within their own jurisdiction.

In summary, the National Center established within the organizational structure of the Library of Congress, would provide a single point of responsibility, leadership, and operational authority for implementation of a significant part of the National Program, that of assuring equal and effective public access and availability to government publications/information at all levels.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings and recommendations are made explicit throughout this paper in context with relevant data. It is useful, however, to provide at this point a recapitulation of major issues for further examination and emphasis.

A. Establishment of a National Commission to Study Public Access to Government Publications and Information.

It is essential to obtain an overall assessment of official publishing as a means of communication between government and the public. A number of pressing issues need to be examined in-depth, as the basis for administrative and legislative action at all levels of government, Federal, state and local. To this end it is suggested that the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science propose the undertaking of a comprehensive study of public access to government publications and information. The proposed study leading to recommendations for national information policy in this crucial area should be carried out by a national study commission of stature and experience. Members should represent all levels of government and also concerned professional organizations from both the public and private sectors. The study commission should be empowered to recommend national information policy with respect to securing the right of all citizens to full, objective and timely information concerning their government's activities. Possible areas in which recommendations should be considered include, but are not limited to the following.

(1) An Act for the Dissemination of Government Information It is suggested that the appropriate Congressional committee(s) consider legislation parallel to the Freedom of Information Act to remedy a serious deficiency in communicating published government information to the public in a form and manner easily adapted for public use. The Freedom of Information Act is only half a loaf. The "right to know"--upon request--guaranteed by the Act has a companion "right to be informed," which if not implemented in an efficient and effective manner diminishes the citizen's knowledge of his governments' programs and policies and their pervading influence on his everyday life. Indeed, the citizen's knowledgeable participation in the democratic process is in jeopardy, if government information is not made promptly and readily and accessible to the public. Public release of previously withheld information is only the first step. An even more important and positive need is to assure that the large volume of significant government documents published daily by the GPO and other Federal agencies is promptly and adequately disseminated and becomes effectively accessible to the using public.

(2) Restructuring the Federal Depository Library Program Reform of the Federal Depository Library Program was discussed but only partially achieved during passage of the Federal Depository Act of 1962. Since that time an increasing number

of concerned individuals and organizations have called attention to the need for a comprehensive study of the depository library system to evaluate its cost-effectiveness in reaching the several publics. With growing recognition of the commonality of government documents at all levels, reflecting increasing inter-governmental relationships, such a study when undertaken should also encompass State and local documents as part of the overall system for communication between government and the public. (The Appendix attached to this paper suggests a possible alternative for the Federal Depository Library Program).

The central importance of libraries to the distribution system for Federal government publications, paralleled in many states, has been formally recognized for more than 100 years. In recent times, however, factors related to the accelerated expansion and complexity of government have caused increasing numbers of the public to look to non-library sources for up-to-date government publications/information. As noted earlier, this has resulted in inequitable and inefficient public access characterized by the development of agency specialized mailing lists, an increasing burden on Congressional and agency offices to handle routine requests, widespread public confusion as to the existence and location of publications/information, and rising costs and unnecessary duplication of government printing and distribution. It becomes urgently necessary to determine whether a reformed and revitalized national depository library system for government publications/information can cope with modern needs for prompt, equal and effective access by an information-dependent society. This question deserves thorough examination by a national study commission. The answers will form an important component of national information policy.

(3) Regional Depositories and Resource Centers

It is recommended Regional Depositories not also State library agencies be re-designated in both name and function as Resource Centers. They would share with State library agencies responsibility for maintaining complete research collections available to all researchers and the public, but would not have administrative responsibilities for regular depositories or other local libraries, except in so far as loan service might be requested. Regional Depositories and Resource Centers ordinarily would receive all depository documents in both full-size and microfiche copies.

(4) Administration of the Federal Depository Library Program

Administration of the Federal Depository Program would become a delegated responsibility of State library agencies, operating under standards and guidelines developed by a permanent Advisory Council and monitored by the National Center for Government Publications, or its equivalent as established. The inspection function, to insure compliance with national standards, would be coordinated by the National Center but actual inspection would be carried out by State library agencies for those depositories under their jurisdiction as Regional Depositories. The GPO would continue in its role as printing source and sales distributor of Federally printed documents, including those printed under contract and by agency field printing plants, except that depository library distribution would be subject to administrative policy control by the National Center. The task of collection and depository distribution of potentially useful non-GPO documents, the majority of which are produced under contract or in field printing plants, would continue to be a matter of primary responsibility of GPO, the National Center having general oversight and policy guidance in areas of primary concern to information access. (The role of Regional Depositories is discussed more fully in Chapter III and in the Appendix to this paper).

B. Research and Planning

A vigorous Federal research and planning effort is essential to the development and continued functioning of a national system to assure equal and effective public access to government publications/information at all levels. The bibliographic and technical aspects are complex enough to warrant conducting a number of studies to investigate major problems and thus provide a basis for future improvements. Notwithstanding the energy and great resources that have been applied in recent years to make government documents more widely accessible and useful, there continue to be pressing problems to which urgent solutions are needed. Some of these problems arise from the application of the new technologies and others derive from increased efforts to extend publications/ information awareness to users and potential users. Still other problems will originate with the agencies and the professions concerned as they struggle with the dynamics of change.

A Federal program of research and development, through grants and contracts, could provide an overall framework within which common investigations could be carried out. It would reinforce and support, not supplant, such studies as carried out by the ALA Government Documents Roundtable (GODORT), Special Libraries Association, and other professional groups which have initiated numerous task force studies leading to change and improvements.

The program for funding research at a modest level for improving access to government publications/information would repay its costs many times over in the efficiency it would produce. Further, by concentrating on common problems, the Federal government would help reduce duplicate and piecemeal studies performed inadequately, and, at the same time, greatly accelerate the rate of improvement in public access to government/publications at all levels.

Some of the priority areas for study and investigation include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Identification of kinds of information for which government publications are used in the several disciplines and project areas, i.e. news of recent developments, statistical data, program information, new regulations, etc., as a basis for better meeting needs of using publics.

- Identification of users and user needs for government publications/information, including means for reaching citizen non-users and potential users.

° Means of facilitating the integration of significant government publications/information into the mainstream of public information awareness and accessibility, including but not limited to secondary services, SDI services, data bases, journals, reviews, promotion activities.

° Federal-State-local cooperation in mutually supportive programs for library depositories and information centers; to include coverage of forms of inter-governmental compacts and nature of legislation necessary.

° Comprehensive study of the present Federal Depository Library System, to determine whether it is cost effective, and its possible restructuring to include government publications at all levels. (An alternative structure for the Federal Depository System is proposed in the Appendix to this paper).

° Identification of areas in which the private sector can be encouraged to participate in the national commitment to major improvements in public access to government publications/information.

° Staffing requirements for processing and servicing government documents, taking into account the several variables, some of which may be specific to a given situation.

° Extent to which academic and special depository libraries provide government document service to the general public, e.g. reference service, circulate documents, etc.

° Investigation of the possibility of institutional payment of page charges to commercial as well as to non-profit publishers with a view to achieving wider dissemination of government-sponsored studies and research projects.

* Determination of rapid and efficient means of computer analysis and publication of data gathered in the biennial and other surveys of depository libraries.

* Improved bibliographical control and management of the report literature to assure improved public access, including the interface among the Library of Congress, issuing agencies, NTIS and other sales and distribution organizations, and the GPO.

* Development of programs for educating users and non-users, and also document specialists and other concerned librarians, in improved methods for exploitation of government publications as a valuable information resource.

* Promotion and publicity tools and techniques necessary to assist users and potential users in becoming aware of the existence and location of useful sources of government publications/information.

* Revision of the form for the biennial survey of Federal depository libraries to include greater emphasis on performance data, with fewer yes or no answers, in crucial areas of use records, services provided, problems encountered, staffing, equipment, etc.

* Systematic discard of unwanted or little-used material, such as low demand or older documents, as a means of collection management.

* Citation analysis among other research tools should be utilized to measure the degree of awareness and use by scholars

and authors generally, of government publications as primary source material across all fields and disciplines.

The above are only examples of the breadth and depth of the topics and issues requiring attention as the field of government publications continues to evolve from its archival past into a system for information dissemination and retrieval. At all times, GODORT (ALA) has several task force groups and subcommittees probing and studying means of further improvement of policies and practices. ALA and other professional associations are also active. Numerous document workshops regularly held around the country are yet a further sign of the vitality and potential of this emerging national information resource.

ALTERNATIVE STRUCTURE FOR THE FEDERAL DEPOSITORY LIBRARY PROGRAM

Introduction

The concept proposed is a radical departure from the present system of selective and regional depositories and involves a major reorganization of Federal official publication/information operations, the withdrawal of the Superintendent of Documents (GPO) from direct administrative control of the Federal Depository System, and establishment of the locus of Federal responsibility with the Library of Congress. The national system would be characterized by strong central planning and coordination but highly decentralized service programs.

Organization

The following 3-part organizational structure is suggested as an effective means for carrying out the objectives of making government publications at all levels readily accessible to the American public, consistent with the goals of the Federal Depository Act of 1962.

1. National Center for Government Publications (a Department of the Library of Congress)
2. State library agencies (also serving as Regional Depositories)
3. Resource Centers (major academic and research libraries)

4. Selective Depository Libraries (containing official publications of all levels of government, i.e. Federal, state and local)*

5. Government Publications and Information Centers (limited collections located in small and medium size public and college libraries)*

Comments Keyed to Above Components

1. The National Center for Government Publications would provide leadership and coordination through cooperation for the national network of depositories of government publications at all levels, including also official publications of other national governments and of the UN and intergovernmental organizations in a national system of depository libraries.

2. The Superintendent of Documents (GPO) would carry out Federal documents sales distribution functions as presently performed; direct distribution to depository libraries would be made by SuDocs on the basis of directions from the National Center. Assignment of the function of cataloging and input to national network(s) should be studied by a joint LC-GPO task force to determine the extent of SuDocs participation in the cooperative cataloging program among Federal agencies.

3. Two full-size copies of all distributable documents of Federal, state and local governments would be furnished the National Center by SuDocs and by State library agencies, one

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*When appropriate, combined with GSA supported Federal Information Centers copy to be held for archival and reference use and the other furnished LC for possible incorporation into its main collections.

4. The State library agencies would be designated Regional Depositories with administrative responsibility for Federal depository libraries in their respective jurisdictions, subject to administrative policy oversight by the National Center. (Currently 49 State libraries are Federal depositories and of these 15 are Regional Depositories). The Regional Depositories would be established and funded through Federal-State compacts specifying the specific functions to be performed. Recommended functions are detailed earlier in this paper.

5. The Resource Centers would include major academic and research libraries desiring to have comprehensive collections of Federal depository publications as well as collections of publications of other levels of government. The Resource Centers would have no administrative responsibilities for the national depository system but would concentrate on service to their scholarly and research clientele, with service to the general public where possible.

6. Selective Depository Libraries, monitored and coordinated within each state by a Regional Depository, would develop reference and circulating collections of official publications of Federal, state and local governments, to the extent required by service to their local clientele. It is likely that most

Federally designated depositories, with no restrictions on the number of GPO items selected, would also serve as State depositories as is now frequently the case. The National Center, in conjunction with the Advisory Council, should be authorized to designate additional depositories based on demonstration of public need and the willingness and capability of the library to meet the national depository standards. Before a library could achieve depository status in this manner, it must obtain the prior approval of the appropriate State library agency. Present provisions for designating depository status would not be offered.

7. Government Publications and Information Centers organizationally would fall in either of two groups, each of which would be monitored by the State library agencies:

a. Small public and college libraries which might select so few documents that their continuance as depository libraries would be open to question;

b. A joining together of Federal, state and local governments to provide effective information services to the local public. This might involve an amalgamation of a Federal Information Center (GSA) with a local public library in the provision of government information/publication services at all levels through inter-governmental cooperation. The establishment in San Diego of an experiment along these lines, previously cited in Chapter IV, would provide useful guidance for other urban areas.

c. Local libraries not now eligible to become depositories -- possibly 10-15,000 -- would be authorized, with the concurrence of State library agencies, to receive limited free distribution of Federal government publications and thereby help to equalize opportunity for public access in the numerous less populous areas.

8. The proposed Federal Depository Library Program, in cooperation with State library agencies, would also relieve pressure on Congressional and Federal Agency offices to provide free copies of Federal documents (currently estimated at 80-100 million per year) in response to requests from individuals and libraries. Options for members of Congress would include (1) as at present, direct requests to GPO and Federal Agencies for shipment of documents to their constituents or (2) referral to local or Regional (State) depository libraries in their districts for availability of the documents desired. Federal Agency offices would also have the latter option.

9. Based on specific assigned responsibilities and functions, libraries serving the public would be eligible for Federal-State assistance of formula-matched funds to help them meet publication/information demands generated by the people within the State. The lack of a suitable funding assistance in the past has in large measure accounted for the small proportion (23%) of public libraries designated depositories.

10. Three basic premises underly the above recommended structure for a National Depository Library System:

a. The system shall provide effective and timely accessibility to government publications/information for all library and information users, i.e. the general public, as well as scholars, specialists, and students.

b. The system shall be built upon existing resources to the greatest extent feasible.

c. While the cost-benefit ratio for improved service to the public is difficult to estimate, further delay in making the required effort is not warranted because the social cost of the system is so great that even a modest percent of improvement in its efficiency would produce a large economy.